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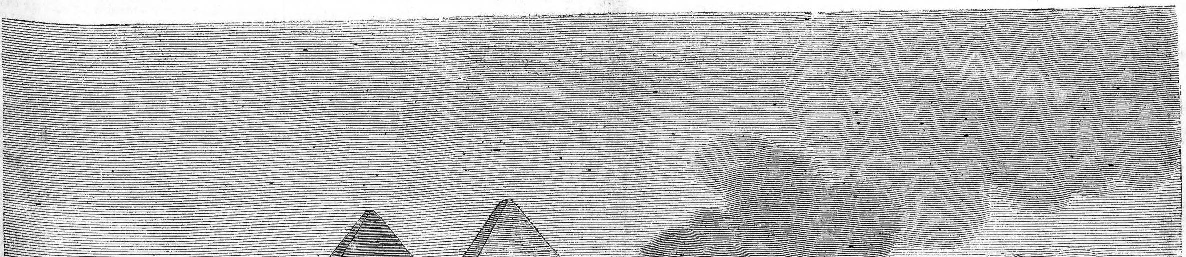
THE CHASE.

The Norman Kings of England, a good old writer assures us, carried their love of the chase to such excess as for a time to involve every civil right in general ruin; yet certainly there was not so much hunting in the eleventh century as there is in the nineteenth. Statistics of the days of William Rufus and Henry I. are not easily got at; but we want no Blue-book to render speculation safe on this point. In England and Wales there are nearly a hundred and fifty separate Hunts. In one-fourth of the districts the meet is four times a week, and in several cases the Master brings out a pack five times regularly between Sunday and Sunday. Among these hard riders are the followers of the famous old Pytchley hounds, the Duke of Beaufort's, the Belvoir, the Cheshire, Lord Leconfield's, Lord Middleton's and Mr. H. Chaplin's. The fox is hunted in this island south of the Tweed perhaps five hundred times every week from October till March, barring the occurrence of a few hard frosty mornings, for nothing else stops the huntsman. Without taking our Staghounds and Harriers into account, it is impossible that the Norman lords and their followers should have done so much hard riding after the wild animals of the forest. The cultivation of the country nine hundred years ago was very partial, and the beasts which the dogs were taught to follow were, without doubt, sufficiently plentiful; but in these days, when we waste very little land between the seas, there must be an immense number of foxes to afford so much sport. Nearly always one fox, often two, and sometimes three, are "run into" every time the dogs go out. At least 15,000 foxes are killed by the hounds every season. That is pretty well upon a strip of land like ours, overrun with population, seeing that the animal is good for nothing in the world except to be hunted, and would be exterminated in a couple of years but for our national love of the chase. In the face of these facts we cannot regard this propensity of ours as a mere lingering vestige of barbaric times. Of its origin in our savage nature there can be no doubt, but it must be, nevertheless, a permanent instinct within us. Hunting is more general and systematic than it was twenty-five years ago, and the England of the eighteenth century could not for a moment show sport by the side of us. It is hardly a hundred and fifty years since dogs began to be trained to hunt foxes only, and when Squire Western rode out with Tom Jones after a hare, Fielding had never seen four or five hundred horsemen behind a pack of hounds. Now, about a hundred packs are led out in these fifty-two counties every week in search of the stag, the fox, or the hare, and in those fields is an army of from eight to ten thousand horsemen. What a spectacle would this be if we could get a bird's-eye view of the whole scene! The American, when he jokes us about our little speck of earth, would be aghast at the thought of all these dogs and hunters madly "racing over the private farms," pastures, and gardens of this intensely civilized bit of land.



THE VICEROY OF EGYPT'S GUESTS AT SUEZ: THE "FAYOUM" SAILING FOR THE CANAL.—*(See page 220.)*

ONE PENNY NEWSPAPER

Of course to the more philosophic spectator this modern hunting is paradoxical and almost ridiculous. To such persons it lacks the element of earnestness and reality almost more than any other pursuit in which rational men engage. It is a mimic warfare, in which we strive our hardest to realize for a few minutes the hot pulsations that moved the hearts of men in their contests with the fierce carnivora of the forest. In the midst of modern modes of life we are looking for a throb or two of the old delights of our savage nature. The excitement is intense, but the fun never quite equals the anticipation. The hard rider, who stops at neither fence nor dike, speaks with a suspicion of jealousy of the spectators who sit at ease in their carriages and see sometimes as much of the sport as the huntsmen. If the fox would only be a little more artful, and knew how to fight with his scarlet-jacketed foes as he does sometimes with the dogs, our blood would grow hotter, and the pleasant passion that rages within us would be better satisfied. Enthusiastic sporting reporters are never tired of insisting that the hounds in full cry and a field of horsemen—the fox a dim fleeting speck away in front—form the most picturesque sight conceivable; but who has ever read a really successful description of the spectacle? It is brilliant and exhilarating, but it is wanting in some important elements of the picturesque. There is too much art in it already for the artist. To make a picture of the hunt, like painting a scene in a play, is always more or less a failure. There are numberless paintings and sketches of the hunting-field, done, some of them, by master hands, but, unless the subject is redeemed by some trait of life independent of the chase no man of taste will hang them on his walls. Genius cannot save them from an air of stiffness and artificiality. A fine hearty Englishman is the man in a red coat when in the hunting-field, but on the canvas he is a lay figure. The artist, to be effective, must go direct to nature. Man and beast struggling in real earnest for the mastery would afford a splendid study, but the mere pageantry of strife mocks the student. There is a certain posture-making in the disposition of the hounds and the "field." Gustave Dore has given us an illustration of one of La Fontaine's Fables which typifies the appetite in us for the chase breaking out again, a little awkwardly and yet with a certain charm, through the metamorphosis of our modern life. The favourite cat, changed by magic into a woman, and become the fascinating bride of her master, is everything that is human and womanly, till suddenly a mouse runs along the bedroom floor, and in a moment the fair creature pounces after it, pursuing her prey across the apartment on all fours! In that unique attitude has the most imaginative of living artists depicted the lady, with sweet face, dishevelled locks, her rounded arms and taper fingers stretched out to seize the mouse. Something like that is the fox-hunting of the nineteenth century. Our earliest forefathers went hungry into the woods and plains, followed their prey as the tiger does his game, running it down and perhaps eating it on the spot. What in these days is so enlivening as "the meet?" The horses are handsomer than those on a show-ground. The riders will not look so well at the County Ball. The fox is the only anachronism, and a modern writer, who dearly loves the hunt, gravely foreshadows the "drag" of the future, when, as he says, Reynard will be discarded, and "the sport will be managed with a bit of rag dipped in asafœtida." In Ireland, indeed, they sometimes trail the dogs after a red herring tied to a string. Should the time come when all the Hunts are supplied with game from Great Yarmouth the business of "preservation" will be very much simplified. As it is, the wild animal of the chase has become a tame one. He must be cultivated and petted, and permitted to indulge in his favourite pastime of stealing poultry and pheasants. The preservation of game, however, began very early in this country. The Norman Earls no more hunted from necessity than our own country squires do. Under the Conqueror's immediate successors a man compounded for homicide, but to destroy the beasts of chase was a capital offence. A thousand years do not count for much in matters of this sort. Hunting even then was sport, and nothing more, and the necessity of clearing the country of mischievous brutes a pretence. The fiction remains till now. The common law of England has been so construed that an action for trespass does not lie against the followers of the hounds, because the fox is vermin to be destroyed. Public feeling rather than logic is responsible for the interpretation. To have seen the present Lord Chief Justice of England in the front rank of five hundred horsemen following Lord Portsmouth's hounds across the North Devon fields and pastures is to appreciate in some degree the relation between fox-hunting and the law. The sympathy of Englishmen of all ranks for the chase is a defence as good as the most rigorous of the feudal statutes. The farmer, who bears the whole brunt of it, does not find it in him to condemn the sport. The sight of the pack and the huntsmen fires his blood, and a lost turkey or two at the moment counts for little. His feeling, however, towards the fox, unless he follows the hounds, is rather of the ancient than the modern sort. He dislikes the animal, and instead of saving him up for game, would "run into" him at any moment as an enemy.

The chase will hold its own. No English pastime can compete with it. Anachronism tells for nothing against it. The hunter's instinct is sufficient to vindicate the sport. The love of it is powerful enough to come between us and our strongest habits, our most cherished notions, our gravest responsibilities. English ladies are as shy of rain as of the breath of slander—except when the hounds are thrown off, and then nothing can keep them out of the saddle. We are rigid in our way in the observance of class distinctions, but the duke and the butcher, the fine lady and the stable-boy, are on a par when the dogs are upon the "drag." We are wonderfully earnest in war, and Wellington was the soberest and most business-like of soldiers; but the "Iron Duke" had a pack of fox-hounds with him, and he never forgot them. Here is a scrap of letter he wrote from Villa Foro to Major-General Stewart in 1812:—"I hope we shall soon have Waters here, particularly as the hunting-season is coming on apace, and I shall want him for the earth-stopping business; he has been very nearly dying, poor fellow, *and, what is worse, he has lost all his dogs.*" A fortnight later, writing instructions to Lieut.-Ceneral Hill, whom Soult was hotly pursuing, the object of the enemy being to separate Hill from his commander-in-chief, he said, "If you move from the Adajo take care of our stores and people, including my hounds at Arevalo." The Duke was following an illustrious example. Edward III., four hundred years earlier, had sixty couples of stag-hounds and as many harriers with him throughout his glorious campaign in France, Will the pedigree of any of the beautiful fox-dogs of to-day trace back to the royal hounds that followed their master to Crecy and Poictiers? It wants not that, however, to associate the past and present in the spirit of the chase. Wellington in Spain and Edward in France, hunting an enemy's country with English hounds, seem to bid defiance to dates and the progress of time. Indeed the true huntsman, if he is a man of intellect and of letters, as he often is, will keep a love in his heart for the annals and epics of the old heroic days. To Homer the music of the hounds in chase was a delightful sound; and the late Lord Derby translated the "Iliad," and followed the pack. It is on the principle of animal reaction, most likely, that men desert the study and the studio at the huntsman's cry; for it is not in culture to help man or woman to realize the supreme exhilaration of the hunting-field, and neither education nor elegance can qualify the feeling. But there is a freshness in the sport which runs well with the healthy realism of modern literature and art. Fielding almost the only realistic writer of the eighteenth century, rode after the dogs, and while in our own days his example has been followed by Leech, Trollope, Kingsley, and the men of that school, the sport may rest secure of its popularity, even among the millions in our cities who never follow a foxhound.

THE MAYOR'S BREAKFAST AT WORCESTER.

It seems to be a necessary function of Corporations that they should be hospitable. To entertain their fellow-citizens is, apparently, one of the few things left that is worth living for; and whilst it is certain that charity covers a multitude of sins, there can be no question that civic hospitality goes a great way towards inspiring the outside public with a genuine regard for the maintenance of corporate institutions. We have always been led to associate mayors, aldermen, and common councilmen with good living—with feasting, indeed, and all the delights of the festive board. The records of every municipality if searched would, we are certain, yield incontestable proof of this assertion; the musty, yellow volumes are full of allusions to the good cheer of the particular age in which they were written. You shall find in these moth-eaten books frequent reference to "sack," and "sherris," and "fat capons," and "wild duck," and "salmon," and (in the West Midland records) especial mention, most probably, of "lamperns," those delicious morsels that the epicure loves "not wisely, but too well," as the rash Moor loved his inoffending lady. There be, we know, cynics who growl their disclaimers at civic hospitality, who would cry down these harmless entertainments, and who pull long faces whenever banquets are mentioned; we care not for such folk; away with them and their insipid doctrines; we will have none of them. Give up our Lord Mayors' banquets, quotha! surrender without a murmur such breakfasts as those given annually on their accession to office by the Mayors of Worcester, indeed! Perish the thought! We would as lief relinquish *Habeas Corpus*, the Bill of Rights, the Franchise, nay, Magna Charta itself! Shall there be no more cakes and ale because they are virtuous? "Yea, and ginger shall be hot i' the mouth!" Let us be merry—sing to-day, pray to-morrow, as Falstaff, mad wag, hath it. Let us be merry, we repeat, for verily the Mayor's Breakfast cometh only, like Christmas, once a-year.

Waiting in the old Guildhall this Friday morning in the rapidly-waning year of grace one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine—this year so soon to be numbered with its shadowy predecessors, and never more to be aught to any of us but a memory waiting with some three hundred other guests in the entrance-hall until the door is thrown open and we are free to ascend to the banquetting-room upstairs, the mind reverts to past revellings and banquetings in this same venerable fabric, and to the stirring scenes that the citizens erst witnessed within and without its walls. Before us hang some relics of the Civil War time—armour that brave men wore when they fought for the King to the moment when, weary and pierced by the Roundheads' halberts, they sank on the blood-soddened ground, and died with "God save the King!" on their lips! Sad gatherings were the municipal assemblies of that period! Was there a festive meeting in the Guildhall during any of those years of fighting and bloodshed? Tell us, Mr. Town Clerk—tell us, too, if there was a Mayor's Breakfast in 1651? With the bitter memory of the King's flight to Boscobel fresh in their minds, did the citizens meet at the Guildhall to toast each other and quaff the red wine, ha! ha! Why the streets ran red with the blood of good men and true, the welkin rang with the moans of the wounded! Those were no times for feasting, i' faith, when brother met brother and father attacked son in the field—one shouting for "the King!" the other for "the Parliament!"

In after years, when the war-time came to be forgotten, and peace smiled upon the city, there must have been rare junketings in Worcester; and later, your Stallards and Southalls, your Webbs and Woodwards, have not been slow at imitating the good old customs of their predecessors. This year the purple robe and the gold chain (a badge of office generously given to the city by Mr. Sherriff, M.P., until which time the Worcester Council did not possess such a glittering appendage) are worn by Mr. Richard Evans Barnett, who will not disgrace the one nor tarnish the other. A self-made man, and a worthy citizen, the new Mayor of Worcester, of whom we shall have more to say presently, has deservedly won the esteem and friendship of his fellow-citizens, and has inaugurated his year of office worthily and satisfactorily by the entertainment which he gave on Friday.

As his Worship stands in the hall receiving his friends and their hearty congratulations, he must experience something of the sensation felt by those who have deserved well of their country. The new Mayor has deserved well of his native city, and we are here to personally acknowledge the gratification we feel at his elevation to the dignity of Chief Magistrate of the old city. We have ranged ourselves in some sort of order around his Worship when the door which the dingy flags do *not* ornament is thrown open, and one becomes conscious of an earthquaky motion which lifts you off your legs, sends your arms flying into your neighbours' ribs, and disarranges the toilet you have so carefully made in the dim morning light. Expostulation is useless—resistance unavailing. With a Minor Canon before you, and another behind you, reminding you of the Charge of the Light Brigade; with an Alderman on your right, a Town Councillor on your left, and plethoric citizens hemming you in on every side, and seeming to like it—what can you do, dear sir, with the gold-rimmed eyeglass, or you, *cher ami*, with your green silk umbrella sticking into everybody? What could *anybody* do under such circumstances? Chang, that otherwise utterly feeble Celestial giant, could be of immense assistance were he here, and willing to constitute himself one's protector; but as for ordinary mortals stemming that tide of humanity surging to and fro, and especially inclining towards the door, which has angles, and the walls, which are clammy and disagreeable to the touch, to say nothing of the injury they cause to one's attire—'tis not in such to command a safe passage through this struggling mass, howsoever they may deserve it. The passage is a terrible one; we should be sorry to attempt it oftener than once a year—human nature could not stand it. If you have ever taken your stand at the doors of Drury Lane Theatre on Boxing night, you may form some idea of the rush to get through the door of the Worcester Guildhall, on the morning of the Mayor's breakfast. If you cannot turn the scale at fifteen or sixteen stone, your chance is almost hopeless—you are tossed about like a cork, it is not more than ninety-nine to one that you lose one of your boots. As to your hat—why every one "has" that, as a matter of course; and the normal position of your neckerchief for at least ten minutes is under either your right or left ear, or, in certein cases, at the nape of the neck, where even the meekest minded men object to find it on state occasions and visits of ceremony. If your fighting weight be let us say under twelve stone, you are to be pitied. No sooner have you passed the Rubicon, safely, as you think, and are congratulating yourself upon your good fortune, than you are hustled back, and find your stomach in unpleasant proximity to the edge of the door, your hat over your eyes, the camelia that you paid five shillings for "cut down" in a way not peculiar to hothouse flowers, and the gloves that the young lady at the hosiers stretched so carefully for you hardly improved either in appearance or use by a vertical slit and the loss of the patent fastening. Finding yourself at length on the staircase you gradually arrive at the conclusion that you are walking on something besides the wooden steps, and if you succeed in disentangling your feet from what has encumbered them, you may, without any very great stretch of the imagination, realise the position so often sought and so rarely obtained of walking on a bed of roses—though for roses read geraniums or chrysanthemums, which line the staircase, and into which you have put your feet.

But once reached, the breafast room makes amends for the disagreeables, and there is time, before the Rev. Mr. Crowther says grace, to smoothe your ruffled plumage, and rejoin your dispersed friends. If you can tear your eyes away from the laden tables, a glance at the pictures that hang round the room will give a spur to your appetite, supposing it to stand in need of such a stimulant. Don't make an opera-glass of your hand—it isn't at all necessary; the paintings are large enough for you to see them tolerably well from your place near the head of the table, whilst, as for their history, Mr. Woof has told us all about them in his very useful pamphlet. There are portraits (and if you know them all you can easily skip this paragraph) of Thomas, first Lord of Coventry; Queen Anne; Other, second Earl of Plymouth; Sir John Pakington, fourth baronet, and Recorder of Worcester in 1726; the Right Honourable Thomas Winnington, of whom in 1746 George II. (who, you know, died suddenly fourteen years after of rupture of the heart) said he was the honestest man about his person, Mr. Winnington having thrice refused the Chancellorship of the Exchequer with the bold remark, "The new ministry, Sir, can neither support your Majesty nor themselves; they cannot depend upon more than 31 Lords and 80 Commoners;"—a portrait of the first Baron Sandys, of Ombersley, and whose ancestor, the Rev. Edwin Sandys, was imprisoned in the Tower after the accession of Mary, but subsequently became Archbishop of York; George William, seventh Earl of Coventry, who was Recorder of Worcester in 1774, and died in 1831; George III., who with his Queen, the Princess Royal, and the Princesses Augusta and Elizabeth, came to the music meeting in 1788, and delighted the good citizens by saying, "The loyalty and affection which I have experienced amongst my subjects in this part of the Kingdom, and especially on this occasion, are an ample recompense to me for the public service of 28 years," after which outburst of Royal sentiment the several members of the Corporation had the honour of kissing the King's hand, and their Majesties attended the performance at the Cathedral; Alderman Thomas Carden, grandfather of Henry Douglas Carden, whom Worcestershire should be and doubtless is proud of as one of her most able sons; Christopher Henry Hebb, a learned medico; and, finally, Richard Padmore, who, entering Worcester a poor boy, made his fortune as an ironfounder, achieved the high distinction of representing the city in Parliament, and is possessed of the affection of many and the goodwill of all the citizens.

Looking at the most ancient of these characteristic portraits, you could fancy yourself back in mediæval times, were it not that the toastmaster, the herculean Smith, arouses you from your dreaming by requesting "silence faw grace;" after which, for the next hour or so, nothing is heard but the hum of voices, the popping of champagne corks, and excited enquiries for "stewed kidneys," "broiled ham," and the like, supplemented by a steady demand for tea and coffee, and thenceforth for sherry and "fizz." Here is the *carte*:—Boar's head;

turkeys galantine and roast; galantine of veal, rolled spice beef, game pies, hams, tongues, pigeon, veal, and ham pies, lobsters, veal cakes, collard eels, soles in aspic, potted lamperns; entrées—stewed kidneys, veal cutlets, broiled ham, sausages; sweet jellies, Gateau cakes, Merangue tourtes, Swiss and French pastries, tartlets, cheese cakes, mince pies, sponge cakes, fruits, &c. A very good breakfast, and, thanks to Mr. Rouse, who catered for the first time, excellently served.

No public gathering of Britons,—who, let them sing never so loudly that "they never, never, nev-e-r will be slaves," are serfs to custom,—being considered complete without oratory, the Mayor rises after the cathedral lay-clerks have chanted "Non nobis Domine" (which a friend on our right declares he can't understand a word of), and gives the health of the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the Bishop and Clergy of the diocese, to the latter of which the Rev. B. Davis responds. We have cheered the Mayor right heartily, and applauded for Church and State, but now, of your pleasure, gentlemen, a special cheer for the Dean of Worcester—the "old man eloquent," who stands there bowing his gratification at the warm reception we give him. Another cheer even yet—and still another! The breakfast would be dull, the guests *triste*, without Dean Peel and his speech in proposing the Mayor's health, which he does so gracefully, and in such apt and kind language, that the room rings with frequent applause. He is drifting into the "sere, the yellow leaf" now, but as he gives expression to the dictates of his heart, you admire the gifted scholar, the benevolent gentleman, the excellent priest, all the more perhaps on account of his grey hairs. We should all feel his absence as a personal loss. May the great dispenser of events grant the good Dean many years' health to attend the Citizens' Festival at the invitation of their chief magistrate. When the Mayor has returned his thanks for the Dean's eulogy and for the guests' plaudits, a procession is formed to the Cathedral, where, as we listen to the firm intonation of the Dean, and find ourselves surrounded by hallowed associations of past ages, when the church re-echoed with the hymns and chants of the old monks, the words of the sweet blind poet recur to us—

> But let my due feet never fail
> To walk the studious cloisters pale,
> And love the high embowered roof,
> With antique pillars massy proof,
> And storied windows, richly dight,
> Casting a dim religious light;
> There let the pealing organ blow
> To the full-voiced choir below,
> In service high and anthems clear,
> As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
> Dissolve me into ecstacies,
> And bring all heaven before mine eyes.

And when we have listened to the words of the preacher (Canon Wynter), and contributed our mite towards the collection for the local charities, which, amounting to £44 15s.. is to be divided—one-half to the Infirmary, two-sixths to the Dispensary, and one-sixth to the Ophthalmic Institution; when we have accompanied his Worship back to the Guildhall, and (such is civic hospitality!) refreshed ourselves with mulled wine, we take leave to wish the Mayor a successful year of the office he has begun so well, and leave the memory-haunted hall with the time-honoured sentiment on our lips—"*Floreat Vigornia.*"

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Foot-and-mouth disease has appeared near Inverness.

M. de Lesseps was married on Thursday at Ismailia.

Frederick Hinson, the Wood-green murderer, is to be hanged on the 13th inst.

A piano played by the feet has been invented in Cincinnati.

American papers announce that gold has been discovered in Alaska.

Prince Leopold is again suffering from ill-health.

The Liverpool magistrates have decided that a bicycle is a carriage within the meaning of the Act, and fined a youth named Carrol for driving one upon a footpath.

Owing to an accident at the Southport Gas-works, the supply of gas to consumers was entirely stopped on Friday night, and the town was left in a state of darkness.

It is reported that the new Irish Attorney-General will be Sir Colman O'Loghlen, who will be transferred from the position of Judge Advocate General, and will not need to be re-elected for Clare.

Messrs. E. Stracey, Hulme, Hardiment, and Banfather are expected to be put upon their trial at the next Norwich assizes for bribery committed by them at the Norwich election, in November, 1868.

The Duke of Edinburgh has visited Pekin *incognito*, and has since arrived at Shanghai. His Royal Highness was enthusiastically received, and attended a grand ball given in his honour.

The Queen, who returned to Windsor from Claremont on Wednesday, will probably leave for Osborne about the 18th inst. Her Majesty will spend Christmas in the Isle of Wight.

The Civil Governor at Madrid has ordered all the inhabitants of that city, except the military and the volunteers, to deliver up their arms. A reactionary conspiracy has been discovered at Manilla, and one person implicated has committed suicide.

A postal convention has been signed with Great Britain, by which the postage for letters from France to England, and *vice versâ*, is reduced from 4d. to 3d., and the weight allowed for a single rate is raised to ten grammes.

The *Rhine Gazette* says:—"The iron bridge yet unfinished, which the Railway Company of Berg was having constructed across the Rhine, has fallen, in consequence of a laden vessel having come into collision with the scaffolding of the construction. About 40 workmen have been killed and 20 wounded in this catastrophe. This accident will retard for six months the completion of the bridge."

The railway communication across Mount Cenis has been totally interrupted between St. Martin and Gran Croce by heavy snow storms and avalanches since the 24th ult. On Friday the snow on Mount Cenis was four feet deep.

The official inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of the Carnatic has resulted in the suspension of Captain Baker's certificate for nine months. Captain Baker said he quite agreed with the judgment, but not with the sentence.

A few days ago, a cat, measuring three feet in length and weighing eleven pounds, was shot in the woods of Goldsborough, near Knaresborough. It is known to have been living, in a wild state, in the woods of that locality for the last two years or more.

The Evangelical party in London intend holding a series of meetings, with a view to repair some of the mischief which might otherwise be done by means of the Œcumenical Council at Rome and Roman sympathisers in England. The first meeting took place at Freemason's-hall on Wednesday.

Mr. Robert Barnes, who has already given a large sum to the Barnes Convalescent Hospital, Manchester, has intimated his willingness to give eight acres of land in the country for the purpose of training boys from the Industrial Schools in husbandry, and to erect thereupon the necessary buildings, estimated to cost about £6,000.

The *Army and Navy Gazette* states that it is not impossible that the recommendation of the Royal Commission on purchase in the army, which advised that appointments to the rank of regimental lieutenant-colonel should in future be made by selection without purchase, may be definitely adopted and carried into effect next year.

The Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, where the greater part of the ammunition of the country is manufactured, is shortly to be closed for a space of two years. Out of many thousands of skilled workmen, only a few hundreds will remain at the arsenal to keep the machinery, which is very extensive and of great value, in good condition. It is anticipated that further considerable reductions of military expenditure are in contemplation.

There was a very disorderly meeting of Irishmen in Glasgow on Sunday night. The assemblage was called for the purpose of considering the necessity for adopting further constitutional measures to obtain the release of their fellow-country men from "English prison pens." Mr. Gladstone's recent decision respecting the Fenian prisoners was described as undignified and impolitic, and the meeting was urged to protest against it. It was resolved, though not unanimously, to take no further steps in the matter. There was much fighting throughout the evening.

Burnt to Death by Smoking in Bed.—Ann Greenhalgh, a widow, of Bolton, was burnt to death on Friday night. The deceased was left alone in the house, and on one of her sons returning home at midnight he found the place full of smoke. He aroused a neighbour, and upstairs they discovered the deceased on the floor, with her night-dress burnt off, and her body terribly charred and disfigured. All the bed linen had been consumed, and the bed and mattrass were smouldering. It is supposed that the fire had arisen through the deceased smoking in bed.

Government and the Telegraphs.—It is stated that although the most strenuous exertions will continue to be made to enable the Government to take over the working of the telegraphs on the 1st of January, there are doubts if it can be effected before the middle or end of that month. Meanwhile it is reported that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not appear in the market as a borrower of the amount to be raised for compensation, but will meet it temporarily or otherwise by adjustments in connection with various branches of the public accounts.

The New Peers.—On Friday the new peers were gazetted. The title of the Earl of Southesk in the peerage of the United Kingdom is Baron Balinhard, of Farnell, Forfarshire; and that of the Earl of Listowel is Baron Hare, of Connamore, Cork. Lord Edward Howard takes his seat as Baron Howard, of Glossop; the Right Hon. J. W. Fitzpatrick as Baron Castletown, of Upper Ossory. Sir J. D. Acton as Baron Acton, of Aldenhem; Mr. Robartes as Baron Robartes, of Lanchydroc and Truro; Mr. G. C. Glyn as Baron Wolverton, of Wolverton; and Colonel Greville-Nugent as Baron Greville, of Clonyn, Westmeath. According to the *Daily News* Earl Grey made 34 additions to the peerage; Lord Melbourne, 39; Sir Robert Peel, 11; Earl Russell, 24; Viscount Palmerston, 23; the Earl of Derby, 25; and Mr. Disraeli, 4.

Death of Madame Grisi.—We regret to announce the death of Madame Grisi, of inflammation of the lungs. Giulia Grisi was born May 22, 1812. Her father was an officer of engineers in the army of Napoleon I., and her aunt the once celebrated singer Josephine Grassini. She was educated in a convent at Girizia, and it is said that the success on the operatic stage of an elder sister, who died early, induced Giulia to choose the same profession, although at the time her voice gave little promise. She made her first appearance at Bologna in a contralto part, appeared in "Romeo e Giuletta" at Florence and at Milan, and made her *début* in London in 1834 as *Ninetta* in the "Gazza Ladra," when she achieved a decided success. Every part which she assumed after her appearance steadily increased her reputation, which may be said to have been established by her impersonation of the *Queen* in "Semiramide," and of *Donna Anna* in "Don Giovanni." From her first appearance in opera in this country till 1861, with one exception—namely, in 1842—Madame Grisi did not miss a single operatic season. She had a most triumphant career in Paris, and was *prima donna* of Her Majesty's Theatre till 1846, when she transferred her services to the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, where she took a farewell in 1861. She has sung once or twice since that date on special occasions, and re-appeared in 1865, and for a short time at Her Majesty's Theatre during the season of 1866. Madame Grisi has been twice married; on the second occasion to Signor Mario, the eminent tenor, by whom she has had four children, three of whom, we believe, are living. Madame Grisi sang last at Birmingham, with Mario, about four years ago.

The Pantin Tragedy: the elder Kinck Found.—The body of the eldest Kinck (one of the victims of the Pantin tragedy) has been discovered in the place indicated by Tropmann. The attention of those engaged in the search was directed to the spot where Kinck was buried by large flights of ravens, which had been preying on his remains. The body when found was much disfigured, and was identified by means of the clothes found on the corpse—or, rather, what remained of it—of the murdered man. Tropmann states that before disposing of Madame Kinck and her children, he enticed the husband into Haut Rhin. They went together to an inn, and afterwards, "under the pretext of going to discover a method of fabricating base coin," proceeded towards the forest. Not far from the ruins of Herrenfluch, between Cernay and Olwillers, Kinck felt tired and thirsty, and Tropmann, who had provided himself with prussic acid, gave him some of the poison in a glass of water.

A Secession from the Church.—For the past few months (says the *Manchester Guardian)* there has been considerable dissension in the parish of Heapey, near Chorley, owing to the incumbent, the Rev. J. Fisher, who is infirm, refusing to comply with the wishes of the congregation by appointing the Rev. J. Shaw to be his curate. The majority of the congregation, numbering about 500 persons, some time since left the church, took a room in Mr. Todd's mill, and commenced to build a church for themselves, which is now completed. Ineffectual attempts at reconciliation have been made, and on Wednesday night a meeting of the congregation was held at Wheelton, to consider whether they should not leave the Church of England. A statement was made by Mr. Shaw as to the position in which they stood, from which it appeared that Mr. Fisher had said that Mr. Shaw should never enter his church so long as he had breath, and that this being so the Bishop of the diocese was powerless in the matter. The question was warmly discussed, one member observing that they had better go where they were welcome than stop in a church where they were not wanted; and another that they would only be going in advance, for shortly the Church of England would be disestablished. A motion was then proposed and carried unanimously to the effect that "the congregation should leave the Established Church and join that called the Free Church of England." Now that 500 persons have left, the parish church of Heapey has only a congregation of about 50.

A Woman Marrying Two Wives!—The *Newcastle Chronicle* says a strange disclosure has been made at Etherley, near Bishop Auckland, by the death of a woman who has for the past fifty years resided in that neighbourhood as a man and married two wives. It is said that she came from Scotland fifty years ago in the guise of a young man, and obtained employment at one of the collieries, at which she worked as one of the men for some time, and paid her addresses to, and ultimately married, a servant girl living at the village inn. After her marriage, she relinquished working at the pit, and commenced to make besoms, yellow clay balls, and pipeclay rubbers, which she and her partner vended in the surrounding villages. They had lived together 23 years, when the wife died, and the reputed husband professed to lament her loss very much, but at length the grief wore off, and she married a second wife, with whom she lived for a number of years, but not on the most affectionate terms, and eventually, by mutual consent, they separated. For some time the woman had lain on a bed of sickness, and been dependent upon some kind neighbours. The other day she died, and then the discovery of her sex was made. The deceased woman gave her name as Josiah Charles Stephenson, and she has often been heard to speak of being heir to some property about Berwick-on-Tweed, but had no money to go and claim it. Many strange stories are told in connection with this singular individual's history.

The King of the Belgians in London.—The volunteers presented an address to the King of the Belgians on Thursday, which his Majesty graciously acknowledged. The same night a dinner was given at the Mansion House in the King's honour. The company numbered about 250. Dinner was announced at a quarter after seven; King Leopold leading the Lady Mayoress to her seat on the left of the Lord Mayor, and the Duke of Cambridge Mrs. Vincent Figgins. The King sat on the left of the Lady Mayoress, having Mrs. Vincent Figgins on his left; next to her sat his Royal Highness Prince Christian, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Governor of the Bank of England, &c. The Lord Mayor had on his right the Duke of Cambridge, Prince Teck, the Belgian Minister and Mdme. Beaulieu, the Duke of Argyle, Lord Napier of Magdala, Lord Seaton, Mr. Goschen, Sir Bartle Frere, &c. In responding to the toast of his health, the King said,—My Lord Mayor and gentlemen, Belgium thanks you for the honour done to its King, and will, as well as myself, find in this demonstration of friendship new strength to follow your footsteps in the path of true progress. I am desirous, gentlemen, to express to you how much we Belgians respect and honour the city of London and the British empire. In doing so I pay due homage to labour and industry, to liberty and civilization, and to that beneficient and wise policy which moderates the strong, supports the weak, and is constantly animated by a glorious sympathy for the rights of peace and the security of all nations. I have a toast to propose—I ask you to drink to the city of London and to its chief magistrate, the Lord Mayor, and to the numerous high officials, the representatives of so many towns, boroughs, and counties, who have done me the honour to sign the address presented to me to-day. The Duke of Argyle, referring to the "depression" under which it had been said Mr. Gladstone was suffering at the Guildhall on the 9th ult., denied that Ministers were depressed. I believe (his grace observed) that you have mistaken the language of my right hon. friend. I believe it to be an entire mistake that he is labouring or that we are labouring under any depression of spirit whatever. We feel the weight, we feel the responsibility of the position in which we are placed. We feel the difficulty of some of the questions with which we are called to deal. But we have faith in our countrymen, and we have faith in the principles which it is our duty to maintain.

The Government, it is stated, intend to employ convicts to make the boots for the police force of London.

Minor Imports.—The minor imports in the Board of Trade monthly accounts "unenumerated" comprise a most miscellaneous collection of entries. In the year 1868 there was imported into the United Kingdom 22,738lbs. of human hair, of the computed value of £9,096, and this was in addition to hair "enumerate" of the value of £43,097, besides goats' hair and camel's hair. Only one ass was imported in the year, and one mule; but there were 32 goats. As many as 21,024,124 goose quills arrived, and slate pencils of the value of £13,052. The list shows an import of 40lbs. of hats of bast, cane, or horse hair, and 1,490 hats of hair, wool, or beaver; hoofs of cattle of the value of £4,273; 5,323lbs. of leaves of roses; 32,976lbs. of down; 506,653 brmboo canes, and 86,993 walking sticks, not specially described; 261cwt. of casts of busts, statues, or figures arrived in the course of the year, and 9,602 oil paintings. The list includes 3,875lbs. of chloroform, 118cwt. of caviare; flower roots of the value of £38,272; plants, shrubs, and trees of the value of £38,317; one ton of ore of gold, of the value of £33; precious stones of the higaer class, £15,608; and of the inferior class, £14,530; besides unenumerated jewelry of the value of £68,684.

Illness of the Archbishop of Canterbury.—Even in his serious illness the Archbishop of Canterbury does not forget the necessities of the Church. In a letter on the subject of ruri-decanal conferences, his Grace, through Archdeacon Parry, asks the rural deans in his diocese to invite the clergy to a meeting, not now for discussion, but for prayer. The Archdeacon writes of his Grace:—"Prayer," he said, "is better than discussion;" and, he continued, "tell them I have come to the determination what to pray for myself. I have desired to live especially that I might carry out the organisation of lay helpers in the Church. But it is possible that my life may be an hindrance and not a help to the work. So now I quite determine to pray that God will give me and His Church that which shall be best. This prayer cannot be wrong, as God knows what is best. If I were to pray for my life, I might pray for that which might be an hindrance and not a help to the work of His Church." I have only to add to these affecting words that the Archbishop's mind has from the first been perfectly clear, and that his whole trust has been placed in the merits and mediations of the Lord who died for sinners." The Archbishop of Canterbury will not hold an ordination this Christmas. His Grace's next general ordination will be held on Sunday, the 13th of March, 1870.

Alarming State of Ireland.—The Dublin correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* gives an alarming account of the condition of Ireland. Fenianism (he says) is again widespread in the country, and lawlessness seems to be rampant. After a journey through Ireland from North to South, I am in a position to say that, except that well-conducted class, the tenant farmers, who have invariably been found in the loyal ranks, the lower stratum of the population have gone in for such chimerical ideas that it is hopeless to appease them by any such scheme as that of "fixity of tenure." Still less is it possible for the priests or bishops to secure unanimity among the members of their congregations, for the influence of the clergy has largely suffered of late. Here is one of the latest outrages. A farmer named Michael Doran, while ploughing in one of his fields, on his farm at Thomastown, county of Kildare, was fired at one day last week, by some person unknown. On receiving the first shot, in the right side, Doran fell on his knees. He then turned round to look after the assassin, when he received a second shot, which took effect in the left arm. Two other shots were fired in quick succession, which did not take effect. The would-be assassin then ran away. The cause of the outrage is unknown, but it is supposed that Doran was mistaken for his brother, who is a deputy agent of Mr. Yeates, who, it is said, made himself obnoxious some time since in consqeuence of having ejected a woman from their farm. The injured man is progressing favourably.

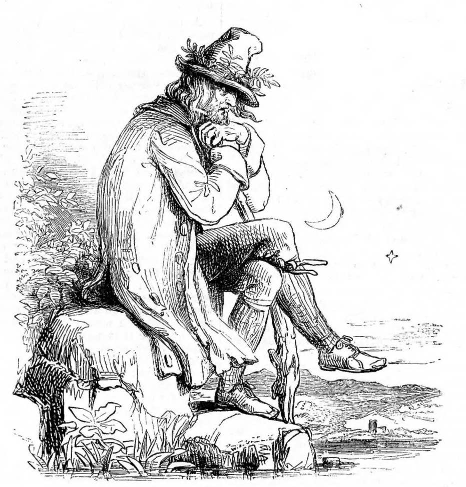
A Juvenile Dinner Party.—The first of the dinners given during the winter by the managers of the London Refuge for Homeless and Destitute Children to the pupils of the ragged schools for St. Giles's and St. George's, Bloomsbury, was served on Friday at one o'clock, and between 400 and 500 guests sat down in an upper room at the Boys' Refuge, 8, Great Queen Street. The object of these dinners is to give at least one plentiful and wholesome meal each week to the ragged school children, and, as a rule to which there are but few exceptions, the tickets are only issued to those pupils who are regular in their attendance. If funds admit, the dinners will be given twice a week instead of once, but such liberality is not at present practicable. The food provided consists of boiled and roast beef, with a thick slice of bread and plenty of potatoes. The meat is cut in slices before the arrival of the guests, and kept hot, so that when they are seated and grace has been sung, they may all be helped without delay. The portion given to each child was so abundant that many were unable—or, at all events, were not desirous—to consume it all; and it has become an institution at these dinners that something may be taken away for "sister" or for "mother." Many of the children thus carried off little parcels, an arrangement very much to be desired if it is spontaneous, but apt to lead, it may be feared, to these parcels being demanded at home. Grace after meat was sung, and then the children filed out two and two, rising from the successive benches in order, and receiving as they passed a reminder to be at school at half-past two o'clock. The cost of each child's meal was about 5d., so that the dinner for 450 would be furnished for about £8 or £9. Such is the amount which the managers ask from the benevolent twice a week until next March. The dinners are but an offshoot from the ordinary work of the institution, which is to rescue destitute boys from the streets, to feed and clothe and teach them, make them farm labourers, or carpenters, or tailors, or seamen, and then give them a start in life. The records show that in these respects the operations of the charity have been highly successful, and that there are many industrious and prosperous men who have been indebted to it for all that makes them respected in life.

A FAIRY TALE.

The reader has but to study the advertising columns of the newspapers to be made acquainted with the near approach of Christmas. You cannot take up a news-sheet without meeting the announcements of enterprising publishers, who have been having an arduous time of it with authors and artists when everybody else was taking his or her holiday. Extra numbers of the Christmas Magazines, their pages replete with stories and rhymes; new editions of popular works of travel and adventure; biographies of famous men and women; books adapted for Christmas presents to good children, and, best amongst them all, Fairy Tales, with pictures of gnomes and elves and pixies, and all manner of the "good people." These are the stories to read by the glowing fireside, when Jack Frost is abroad, and the north wind is blowing, and the snow is falling gently, making the earth look like a huge Twelfth-night cake, such as you see in the confectioners' windows. What a bright, happy time is that when your belief in the Fairy Story-tellers is illimitable! and you no more dream of questioning their veracity than of doubting the ethereal character of the young lady who performs the part of the Fairy Queen in the pantomime! "Blessings on the man" (says honest Sancho) "who invented sleep!" Blessings, say we, upon those who invented the Fairy stories of our childhood!—upon Hans Christian Andersen, master of his craft; upon the Brothers Grimm, most cunning purveyors of this description of literature; and upon all the other noble army of writers for children!

We have before us a mauve-coloured volume, with gilt lettering and gilt edges, printed upon beautiful paper, and so full of pictures that we anticipate a revolt in all nurseries immediately it is known that there is a copy of "Midsummer Eve" in the house. Mrs. S. C. Hall achieved distinction in the world of letters when many writers whose names are familiar to us were in their cradles, no more thinking of pen-and-ink than of the electric telegraph. Her stories of Irish life and character are of the raciest and cleverest; she always writes "with a purpose;" and she is apparently never more at home than when she is talking, by means of the printing-press, to thousands of children, whom she addresses this year with all her wonted art and tenderness and skill. "Midsummer Eve; a Fairy Tale of Loving and being Loved," if it cannot enhance will maintain Mrs. Hall's reputation as an authoress of unusual power. We are not going to spoil the reader's appetite for the dainty dish here set before them by long extracts from the book; but, instead, we present them with some samples of the pictorial part of the volume. No expense appears to have been spared in the production of the work, the pages of which are adorned by the pencils of the most celebrated artists. Amongst those who have contributed illustrations are Maclise, Stanfield, Creswick, Ward, Goodall, Elmore, Frost, Noel Paton, Thomas Landseer (all Royal Academicians), Hulme, Topham, Kenny Meadows, and other famous artists. In a few introductory words, Mrs. Hall says: "It is believed that a child whose father had died before its birth is placed by nature under the peculiar guardianship of the Fairies; and that, if born on Midsummer Eve, it becomes their rightful property. This introduction will suffice to explain the machinery by which I have endeavoured to trace the progress of a young girl's mind from infancy to womanhood; the good and evil influences to which it is subjected; and the trials inseparable from a contest with the world—loving and being loved."

With this brief indication of the intention of the story, we commend "Midsummer Eve" to all who are looking for a Fairy Tale to present to the little ones who are waiting so anxiously for the blessed Christmas-tide. We have submitted the handsome volume to a large circle of small but very critical listeners, who pronounce "Midsummer Eve" at once "jolly" and "splendid." Where is the author who would wish for higher praise?



"Nothing could have more astonished a stranger . . . than to see the woodcutter seated on the bank, looking into the deep waters of the lake."—See page 131, "Midsummer Eve."

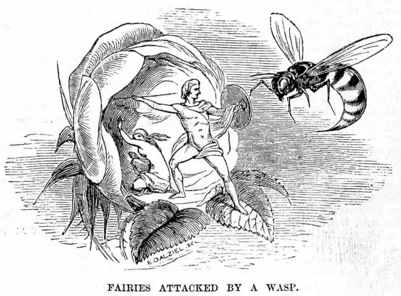
THE VICEROY'S GUESTS AT SUEZ.

With that excess of liberality which characterizes Eastern princes and potentates, the Viceroy of Egypt, as our readers are aware, issued several hundred invitations to people of all countries to attend the inauguration of the Suez Canal. For this purpose the ship *Fayoum* was placed at the disposal of the guests, and on the 15th of November (says the special correspondent of the *Telegraph*) that vessel sailed out of Alexandria harbour, having on board some hundreds of the Viceroy's guests. When the guests arrived at Port Said, after a disagreeably rough passage, they found there ships of every nation; the Union Jack was everywhere to the fore; the one flag conspicuous by its absence was the Royal Standard of Great Britain. As we took up our station, the Emperor of Austria was returning the visit which the Viceroy had paid him upon his arrival. It was a gay scene enough. The water was crowded with men-of-war's gigs plying to and fro; and amidst this flotilla of boats, Arab dhows, laden with troops of Bedouins, in all the gorgeous hues of Eastern attire, sailed up and down. The Viceroy and the Emperor stood together upon the midship deck, looking out upon the harbour, and after a few minutes' conversation they lit cigarettes. Then the Imperial Anthem was played by the Viceregal band, and Francis Joseph took his departure amidst the cheers of the sailors who manned the yards of the various men-of-war. After the interview with the Emperor, the Khedive received the visit of Lord Alfred Paget and some other English gentlemen, who came out in the *Principe Tomaso*, a steamer which has been placed at their disposal by the Adriatic Oriental Company. There was luncheon on board for all who called to pay their respects to the Viceroy; and the band played various national airs during the afternoon, "God Save the Queen" and "Partant pour la Syrie" being those most in favour. The evening passed over without any incident of interest, the only event of the night being a ball on board the *Massourah*, at which the Emperor of Austria was not present.

This morning (Nov. 16) we were waked early by the sound of cannon; and all day long our ears have been deafened with the roar of guns fired from every ship around us, till the very teeth in one's head rattled with the jar and clatter. It was the arrival of the Empress of the French which gave the first signal for this avalanche of noise. The *Aigle* had sailed from Alexandria at noon the previous day, and, being a very swift sailer, her coming had been expected at a much earlier hour than that at which she appeared in the offing. It was close upon eight o'clock before the black hull of the yacht with its yellow beading, its taper masts, and its bee-bespangled flags, entered the harbour. The British fleet, which was now once more afloat, was the first to welcome her Majesty. Then, as the *Aigle* glided on, ship after ship responded to the challenge; and, amid guns firing, flags waving, men cheering, the *Aigle* took up its station on the larboard of the *Massourah*, the Emperor of Austria's yacht occupying a like position on the starboard. The Empress stood upon the hurricane deck, and bowed repeatedly in response to the cheers with which she was greeted. At three o'clock the religious function was celebrated which was to inaugurate the opening of the Canal. All the Royal personages were seated in the centre Kiosk, seated on arm chairs turned toward the Mediterranean. The Empress looked handsomer, I think, than I have ever seen her—and that is saying a great deal. Her dress was of mauve silk, covered with deep flounces of white lace; and, though I had the good fortune to stand very near her, I should never have dreamt, had I not known to the contrary, of describing her as having passed the age of the *femme de trente ans*, which Balzac held to be the apogee of female loveliness. The Viceroy had the Grand Cordons of the Medjidieh and of the Legion of Honour fastened over his Turkish uniform, and looked tired, and, if I may speak the truth, sleepy. Behind the front row of Royalties were any number of princes, diplomatists, ladies-in-waiting, equerries, and courtiers. Amidst the crowd of uniforms, the plain black coat of M. de Lesseps and the white Arab bournous of Abd-el-Kader, stood out strangely conspicuous, not so much from their contrast with the gilt and braid around them, as from the marked individuality of the wearers. The chief part in the service was performed by the Patriarch of Alexandria. After several rounds of salutes had been fired Monsignor Bauer, the Chaplain of the French Imperial Court, spoke as the representative of the Catholic Church, declaring, in conclusion, that the Canal was a success, an accomplished fact. Then the Greek Popes sung a sacred chaunt, the cannon thundered forth again from the sea, and the ceremony was over. The Royal party walked down from the kiosk to the quay, preceded by a procession of the workmen of the Canal, bearing flags. The Emperor of Austria led the way, giving his arm to the Empress of the French; the Viceroy followed, with the Prince Royal of Holland on his left, and Abd-el-Kader on his right; and the other Princes and potentates came behind, mixed up together. There was no attempt at any special pomp or show.

Next day the Canal was opened—how successfully the reader already knows.

Our Illustration on the front page represents the *Fayoum*, with the Viceroy's guests aboard, sailing from Port Said for the Canal, on the day before the opening.


E. DALZIEL SC.

FAIRIES ATTACKED BY A WASP.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION AT ROME.

As we have briefly stated, Rome is to have an "International Exhibition." The official announcement states that the products which the Roman Exhibition will comprehend will be chiefly those of modern times, from the epoch of the *Renaissance* to our own days. There will be a special section for works of the Middle Ages. All the objects will be divided into four classes, viz.: First Class—Vases and sacred utensils in all materials, from the most simple to the most precious. Second Class—Sacred ornaments, for the use of persons or for altars, according to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and according to the different functions of the Church. Third Class—Works of art, having for object the Catholic worship, or representation of Christian subjects. Fourth Class—Works of art or of industry for the ornamentation of churches. To the third class belong original works in painting, sculpture, architecture, or their reproductions. Painting comprehends reproductions in various metals, in ivory, in bone, in various compositions, in plaster, &c. Architecture comprehends reproductions in models, in drawings, in engravings, &c. To the fourth class belong ornaments in marble, in metal, in wood, crystals, carvings, all sorts of utensils and of furniture not comprised in the first and second classes, hangings, works of typography, bookbinding, &c.

A Commission will be nominated by the Pope, on the presentation of the Minister of Commerce and of Public Works, to decide if the works presented are admissible or not, &c. Its decisions will be without appeal.

Persons who wish to take part in the Roman Exhibition, whether as authors, or possessors, of works entering into either of the above-named four classes, must address their demands to the Minister of Commerce and of Public Works. These demands will be received up to the close of December, 1869.

The demand must indicate the surname and Christian name of the applicant; the origin and the nature of the object; its length, breadth, and thickness, if it is to be laid flat, and its length and breadth only if it is to be suspended. The exhibitor must also declare the actual or intended dimensions of the glass case, if one is required. The demand must contain the description of the object, with an historic notice, if practicable The descriptions and notices will be made use of for the catalogue, which will be printed.

Everything will be at the cost of the exhibitors, from the transmission of the objects to their definitive arrangement in the Exhibition. Foreign articles, however, sent to be exhibited, will be free from duty both of import and of export. To profit by this privilege, the objects must be registered abroad, and the certificates must bear the two letters E. R. *(Exposition Romaine)* enclosed in a circle. In the inside of the packing-case must be a copy of the demand, and of the notice which accompanies it. Advice of the despatch or of the arrival of each package must be given to the Minister, with reference to the demand which was made in respect of it.

In some professional circles the scheme is not favourably regarded. *The Architect*, a well-informed and ably-written journal, says, it appears that "all which the Papal Government offers to the exhibitors is the shelter of some undetermined building—monastery, barrack, or what not—to be adorned, fitted, maintained, watched, and generally taken care of, at their own expense."

Europe exhibits in her great centres of population the products of the busy life of to-day—the last improvements of the steam engine, the printing press, the electric telegraph, the readiest appliances for travel by land or by sea, for the transmission of intelligence, for the interchange of thought, for the fierce needs of sudden and fiery war, and for the indulgence of a luxury that increases with the wealth and with the fancy of the day.

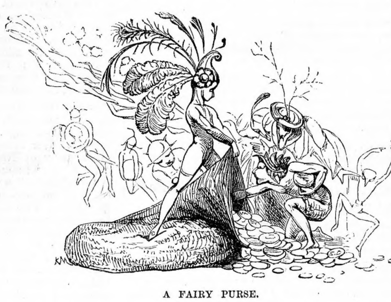
Rome, apart and alone, obstinately negativing the demands of the age, replies with the dogma that all right human thought has been stereotyped from a date when printing was unknown; and proposes her own Exhibition of archæological frippery and tawdry finery as a counterpoise to the displays of London, of Paris, and of the other national and provincial capitals of Europe. Ignoring even her own most valuable treasures, the relics of imperial or even of regal art, the manuscripts stored in inaccessible bookcases, the gems collected by Pontifical *virtuosi*, the most admirable medals in the world, such as those executed by Cellini, and by other artists of the great Leonnie age—she bids us fix our eyes on a bejewelled bishop, a bedecked altar, or a church, bedizened by calico curtains and ugly little idols, with sham silver crowns. She bids us leave the pursuits of literature, of art, and of science, to attend an Œcumenical, or rather a Papal Rag Fair. And, lest anything should be wanting to characterise the appropriate mendicancy of her application for articles to display, she reminds us that even the functions of the police—English visitants to Rome know what that means—are to be at the disposition and at the expense of the exhibitors.

THE PRESERVATION OF STONE.

There is no better plan of hardening and preserving friable, absorbent, and decaying stones of all kinds, than the application of a process known as the "combined process," which I may, perhaps, be allowed briefly to describe. Three solutions are employed in succession, they are applied with a brush as easily as whitewash. These solutions are—1st, soluble phosphate of lime; 2nd, caustic baryta; and 3rd, a special preparation of silica, not ordinary water-glass. The process in its earlier form involved the use of the two first of these solutions, and was employed with considerable success in several public buildings. In its complete and perfected condition the method has received the sanction of Mr. Gilbert Scott, and other authorities. It has been adopted with the stone of St. Pancras Midland Terminus, and elsewhere. Caen or even Corsham stone thus treated ceases to absorb water (carved work in the rain in consequence becomes darker), and though its colour is unchanged, its surface acquires a finish, which greatly improves its appearance. A piece of black cloth is not whitened when rubbed against Bath stone thus prepared, so that the mechanical abrasion of the surface is arrested. The materials cannot cause either dampness or efflorescence on the stone; the process, moreover, is cheap. Where the "combined process" is inapplicable from the pulverulent nature of the surface, a warm solution of solid parafine in benzole, or in mineral turpentine, answers admirably. For decayed internal carved work I prefer occasionally to mix white copal varnish with the solution of parafine. —*Builder*.

THE REBECCA OF "IVANHOE."

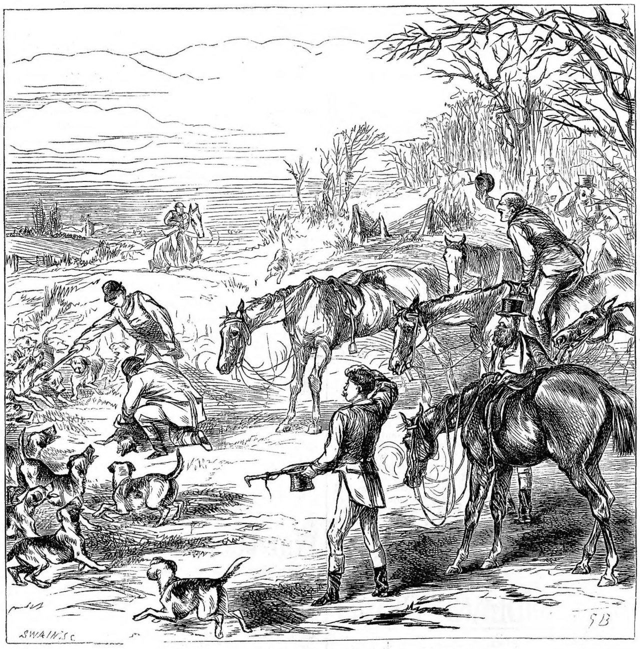
A writer in an Israelitish organ published in Philadelphia gives publicity to the reason of the persistent bachelorhood of the late Washington Irving. Speaking of Miss Rebecca Gratz, a Jewess of that city, distinguished for her zeal in works of charity, who had just died at the ripe age of eighty-eight, he says: "Twenty years ago I heard the story, a story that has long been current in Philadelphia in Jewish circles, among her friends and acquaintances, and which has again been revived here since her death. It runs thus: Many years ago, when Miss Gratz was a young girl, Washington Irving, then already risen into literary reputation, came to Philadelphia and became a visitor at the house of her family. It is said that in youth she was very beautiful and very good, and, as her acquaintance with Irving increased, the beauty of both her character and her features, together with the fact that she was a living representative of that nation whose whole history is romance, so wrought upon his heart that he became deeply enamoured of her. It is needless to say that, had his attachment been ever so strong, with her strength in her faith, it would have been wasted. As it was, it was wasted. Irving left the city, but did not forget the lady of his love." The writer adds that Irving subsequently mentioned to Sir Walter Scott his intimate acquaintance with the beautiful Rebecca of Philadelphia. Scott, it appears, was writing, or about to write, "Ivanhoe," and upon the strength of Irving's description of the lovely Jewess, so firm to her faith, named his heroine Rebecca.



A FAIRY PURSE.

A FENIAN BALL.

A correspondent of the *Daily News* sends to that paper an account of a Fenian Concert and Ball which took place at the New Hall of Science, Old Street Road, London, a few nights ago. A bare-looking room, with an arched iron roof, suggestive of a railway station on a small scale, with a gallery at one end and a stage at the other, was about half-filled with anything but an agreeable-looking assembly. A green flag, emblazoned with Irish emblems, and a "stars and stripes" hanging from one of the crossbeams, were the only attempts at decoration. The occupants of the gallery looked as a whole more thoroughly "Fenian" than the downstairs audience. Below, many were respectably dressed, and none, judging from their faces, were just then very intensely imbued with hatred of the English, or anyone else. After some singing an address was presented to a Mr. Merriman on behalf of the Irishmen of London, for his efforts in behalf of the amnesty movement. The Secretary failed lamentably in reading the address, but was good-naturedly cheered. Of course a speech from Mr. Merriman was indispensable, but he spoke far too long. Once, when in the course of his remarks he said, "I am not a Fenian, and I hope none of you here are," he was greeted with ironical cheers and derisive shouts of "No, not one!" When the dancing began all went on pleasantly, and every one seemed happy. About half-past twelve came what was to me the event of the evening. The word was passed for the Irish "jig," and straightway three or four couples from among the most respectable of the company took the floor. One lady, gorgeous in green silk, with a low body—evidently the wife of a "head centre" at least—led off as the music began with a most distinguished *vis-à-vis*, who I should think from his bearing was high in the Fenian camp. If you have never seen the persistent and ever quickening shuffle, the spasmodic kick with the right leg at intervals; if you have never heard the yelp which now and again enlivens the continuous patter, I cannot hope to describe to you in this letter the Irish jig. As the music got faster and more furious the couples increased. It was as if they were bitten by the tarantula, until at last almost every one in the room, young and old, were shuffling as if for very life. When we left about half-past one o'clock, a diminished company were still keeping up dance after dance with unflagging zeal. My thoughts as I rattled back from the strange scene to my home were many. I could not but fancy that I had seen Fenianism in its most innocent aspect. Concerts and conspiracy cannot very well go together, and I do not think the Fenian ball and concert of Tuesday last will bear any fruits at all dangerous to the British Government. Mr. Merriman was a mistake, but the singing and the dancing were capital in their way. As far as I could gather from several of the Irish lasses I danced with, they came for the sake of the dancing merely, and however much I might at first have been disturbed by the sinister expression on the faces of certain Yankee Irish present, it is but due to them to say they behaved themselves most orderly and quietly. The only chance of a row was when a herculean looking Tipperary man entered strong and out-spoken remonstrances against the music of the "jig." "An shure," said he, "it's no mhusic at all, at all!" And he was not very far wrong.



HUNTING IN THE MIDLANDS.—*BY G. BOWERS.*

A GIPSY TENT.

A long, low tent, about twenty feet in length, not more than seven feet in height, and of the same height and breadth from one end to the other. The frame was made of strong hoops placed pretty closely together, with strengthening girders between; it was well covered with good Scotch blankets, whieh had once been, the gipsy told me, "as white as the driven snow," but which were now brown and weather-stained. A kind of division was made across the middle of the tent, In the front was a space answering to the kitchen and family sitting-room, the centre of which was occupied by a large convenient brazier, filled with glowing charcoal; this had a circular shake-down of straw, perfectly fresh and clean, surrounding it. The further portion of the tent contained a bed, resting on the ground, but piled high with mattresses, and covered with rugs and blankets of the most brilliant colours—scarlet, amber, and blue; two or three boxes, also covered with gorgeous rugs; a set of china richly painted, and a silver tea service; a parrot, in a ludicrous brass cage; a picture or two; and a real Christmas-tree, with its ordinary accompaniments of oranges and sweetmeats suspended to its decorated branches. A pretty lamp, which hung from the middle of the low roof, shed a brilliant light upon all; while the charcoal fire made the tent even warmer than was desirable on a mild winter's night. The occupants were two only—a widow and her unmarried daughter, who was a handsome and graceful young woman of seven-and-twenty, expressing a lofty contempt for the men of her tribe, and informing us that she put up and took down their large tent alone, without their aid. These two possessed, besides their tent, a caravan, and the mother held a license as travelling hawker. The daughter was sitting cross-legged on the straw, with a very large earthenware bowl before her, where she was mixing the ingredients for the Christmas pudding, which seemed likely to be of incredible proportions for a family of two, as she was stoning three pounds of raisins for it. Both were busy, and evidently not in a mood for fortune-telling, or possibly they did not consider us worthy of any exercise of their powers. Very courteous they were, with a finer sort of dignity in their manner than many an English lady would show under a similar infliction—the visit of perfect strangers at a domestic crisis.—*Dickens's "All the Year Round."*

Ferocious Thieves.—Three young men were arrested at Torquay, a few days ago, charged with extensive robberies of drapers' goods. At Torquay railway station, where they were waiting to be taken to the county gaol at Exeter, a woman was waiting with a quart of beer for the prisoners, who, because they were not allowed to drink the beer, smashed the jug, and became so violent that the police called upon the passengers waiting for the train to assist. This only increased the rage of the prisoners, who kicked all those who came near them very severely. Eventually, however, after a sharp struggle, the prisoners were overcome, their clothes being nearly torn from their backs. Both men were covered with bruises; one of them, Vinnicombe, having a severe wound in the face. Before the train started a telegram was sent to Exeter for police to be in waiting at the railway station, as a renewal of the conflict was feared. Four extra policemen were sent, and the prisoners were soon safely lodged in gaol.

PAN.

I.

Promenading the streets, upon pleasure intent,
You've often, no doubt, heard a singular sound
Of music, and, wondering what it all meant,
Turned leisurely round.

II.

Whereupon, if you've eyes, you have presently seen,
Up a court, Punch and Judy, each tendering stripes
To the other, the while that the showman serene
Performs on Pan's Pipes.

III.

Out of ten, nine pass on, never heeding the play,
Or the artist that's blowing the instrument old;
But the classical mind turns reflective away,
For knowledge is gold.

IV.

"Turns reflective," I said, never heeding the grammar—
"Reflective!" it surely could not have been worse;
You'll find such a case (and I'm telling no crammer)
In Tennyson's verse!

V.

If you've read your Lempriére (if you haven't, pray do so,)
You'll know why the Pipes have been called after Pan;
The story's as truthful as "Robinson Crusoe,"—
That wonderful man.

VI.

Old Homer makes Dryope Pan's charming mother,
Yet Penelope puts forth a rational claim;
Nothing's known, I believe, of his sister or brother:
You'll say that's a shame.

VII.

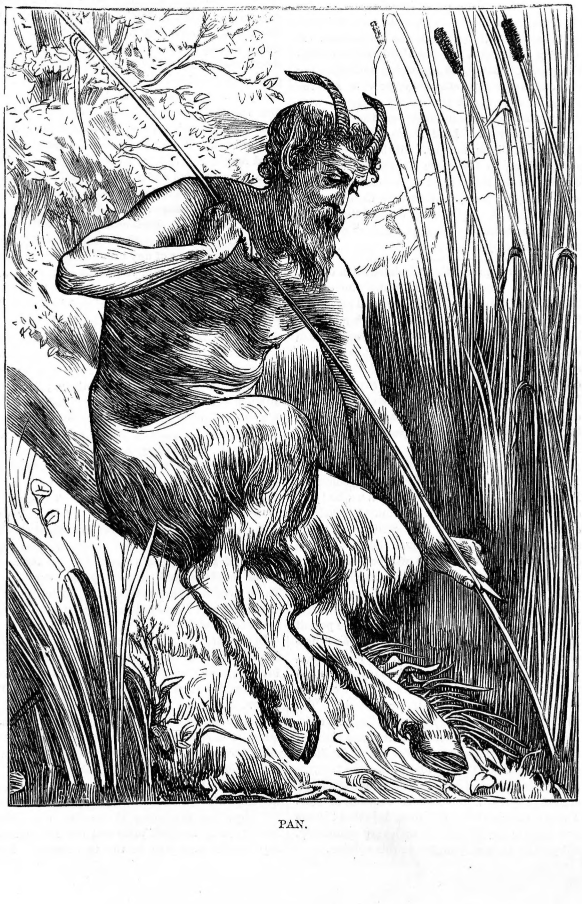
A very queer story by some has been told
Of our hero, but why he received his queer name
I shan't tell you; the narrative, piquant and old,
Is not without blame.

VIII.

A lady of Arcadie, christened Sinoë,
Entrusted with Pan, fled and left him alone;
His father (say Mercury), well plied with Moët,
Found Pan, cold as stone!

IX.

So he wrapped him up warm in the skin of a beast,
And carried him (so says Lempriére) straight to Heaven;
To the gods young Pan prov'd a perpetual feast—
He was ugly—and seven!



PAN.

X.

Christened "Pan" by old Bacchus, at dinner one day,
When the gods had been drinking the best of ambrosia,
The young God of Shepherds, in gallant array,
Then left those symposia.

XI.

In Arcady lived one Miss Syrinx; a charming
Young girl of the period, clever and witty,
With whom Pan fell in love at first sight, quite alarming
This maiden so pretty.

XII.

He grew so annoying that Syrinx applied to
The gods for protection; the latter agreed,
Then in a polite note the lady replied to,
And made her a reed!

XIII.

Pan, love-sick, mooned down by each river and pool,
Thinking ever of Syrinx, his sweetheart so dear;
I'm afraid the goat-man was no more than a fool—
What he did you shall hear.

XIV.

He fancied he heard the lost soul of his lover
Whisp'ring soft nothings one still summer night,
So he cast all about the best reed to discover—
One hollow and light.

XV.

He pluck'd one, and thought 'twas his Syrinx he'd found!
Then cut up the reed into seven; learnt music;
And play'd till he made goats and birds flock around—
Thus came classical music!

XVI.

To tell how the showman adopted Pan's reeds
Would be at this moment too lengthy a story;
Though under my window the drama proceeds
In all its rare glory.

XVII.

Poor Pan! let us write him an epitaph hurried:
"Here lies one more victim to Love's potent spell;
His affection misplaced—by the gods chaff'd and worried—
Dear shepherd, farewell!"

Edward Legge.

SPECIAL Advertisements inserted in this column for special rates.

NOTICE.

IN consequence of numerous Complaints from private persons and the trade, that the ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS is only to be obtained with difficulty in London, Messrs. Hatton & Co., beg to state that they have this week OPENED a SPECIAL PUBLISHING OFFICE, at 33, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, under the management of Mr. R. Watson. Henceforth, all the London Agents will be supplied from that office every Friday morning, and the paper can be had there at all times. Country agents may now order through *all the London Agents*, in the same way that they order their London papers. Orders should be given early for the GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER, to be published on December 18.

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*** Several correspondents complain that they cannot get our paper at Euston Square Station and some other distant places. We endeavour to meet these difficulties as they arise. We would suggest to our correspondents that a quarterly subscription of 4s. 6d. will secure to them a copy regularly posted on Friday night.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. N. (East Hagbourne).—Not good enough for publication; your lines do not scan. Try again.

INQUIRER.—Mr. Gregory, in a foot-note to his map, tells us that the population of Weston-super-Mare, which in 1801 was 108, has about doubled at each census, until in 1861 it stood at 8,023. The rateable value has also increased from £20,000 in 1856 to £44,000 in 1866.

W. W. (Stafford).—Declined with many thanks.

C. B., on "Music," is informed that a new and original song will appear in this paper on December 18th, and that arrangements have been made for the production of several part songs, by one of the most eminent composers of the day.

The Illustrated MIDLAND NEWS

BIRMINGHAM, DEC. 4, 1869.

THE retirement of Lord Cairns from the leadership of the House of Lords is regarded by the Liberal press as a very significant fact. It will no doubt somewhat weaken the Opposition, unless arrangements are contemplated for strengthening it through the new and popular Lord Derby. The *Echo* says Lord Cairns's resignation is influenced by his Liberal views on the Irish land question. The *Standard* can only remember his lordship's masterly speech on the Irish Church.

The Endowed Schools Act is beginning to excite commotion in various districts. In Gloucestershire 800 boys are educated at a cost of £8,000 a year. Contemplating the interference of the Commissioners the county people have resolved to take the bull by the horns themselves. A meeting of trustees has been held, and a resolution passed in favour of organising and adjusting the endowments to efficiently provide for the educational wants of the county at large, with due regard to the interests of the localities already endowed. Lord Ducie has taken the initiative in this movement. His lordship headed a requisition to the High Sheriff for a public meeting on the subject. The trustees are acting most wisely in at once undertaking the correction of abuses which might bring disestablishment if allowed to continue. We hope other counties will take example by Gloucester.

The *Times* reproves the Administration of Mr. Gladstone. They fail in fulfilling the second branch of the duties of a Ministry. Their legislation is good, but that is not everything. They have to maintain order, repress crime, and punish offenders. They have not done this, and when appealed to by the magistrates of Meath they coolly confess their inability, and say, "Tell us how to do it." This is, without doubt, an awful confession. It will do more than anything that has been done for months past to encourage Fenian outrages and Fenian murders. If the powers of the Ministry are not sufficient, says the *Times*, "they know how they may be enlarged. Barony, and County, and Province must be 'proclaimed' if need be, but crime must be made to cease. It is intolerable that week after week accounts should reach us of men shot in the open day by assassins who escape without any risk of arrest or detection. A man is ploughing in a field, or returning from market, or carrying turf from a bog, and shots are fired, and he is left wounded and dying. To suffer this is to permit barbarism to submerge civilization, and, unpleasant as may be the expedient, it were better, in the face of such barbarism, to adopt the means used in semi-civilized countries to repress crime rather than to let it flourish unreproved." The whole nation will heartily endorse this, as we do. How is it the Government hesitate for a moment in taking all necessary measures for maintaining the dignity of the Crown, and protecting the lives of the Queen's subjects? Mercy and liberality are only regarded just now as evidence of fear. There is so much liberty in these days that treason and murder should be dealt with very summarily. All parties are surely united in this opinion.

The much looked for speech of the French Emperor is a disappointing one. Clever, with well ronuded sentences, and full of eloquence, it was sure to be; but the Emperor is evidently still inclined to check those powers of Parliament which he has professed to augment. Nevertheless, his Majesty hopes that the more direct participation of the country in its own affairs will constitute for the Empire a fresh source of strength. "The Representative Assemblies will have henceforth a large share of responsibility. Let them use it for the benefit of the greatness and prosperity of the nation. May the various grades of opinion disappear when required by the general interest, and let the Chambers prove equally by their enlightenment and their patriotism, that France without again falling into deplorable excesses, is capable of supporting those free institutions which are the honour of civilised countries." By all means; if the Emperor is in earnest, and not "in fun." His Majesty had a sly dig at England. It is not often that he is tempted into sarcasm in this direction; but Ireland tempted him. "The New World suppresses slavery, Russia liberates her serfs, *England does justice to Ireland.*" Many of our countrymen will take this mixing up of the Irish with the slaves of America and Russia as an insult; but we are sure the Emperor does not intend that any more than he believes (though the Eldest Son of the Church ought to be true to her) what he says about expecting "a work of wisdom and conciliation from the assembled Catholic Bishops at Rome."

THE BIRMINGHAM SHOWS.

Birmingham has once more passed through its annual week of excitement. Dog, Cattle, Poultry, Flower, and Fruit Shows have been held, and the town has been thronged by country cousins "up for the Cattle Show." Opening on Saturday with the public adjudication of the prizes, the private view was on Monday, when five shillings was the charge for admittance; on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, that price was reduced to the popular shilling, and the shilling (in the evenings) to the still more popular sixpence. Cheap excursion trains brought their thousands of visitors from all parts of the kingdom, the number of visitors being about equal to that in former years.

Briefly summarising the exhibitions, which have been so well and fully reported elsewhere as to preclude the necessity of any detailed reference in these pages, the Cattle Show was a little below its usual meritorious standard. The best Hereford in the show was Mr. William Heath's, who took the first prize and an extra prize of £20. Mr. F. Den's ox took the second prize, and Mr. H. Bettridge's the third. The Queen was an exhibitor. Of the prizes given for shorthorns, Colonel Loyd-Lindsay took the first prize, Mr. Rowland Wood the second, and the Marquis of Anglesey the third. In the class of four shorthorn steers, the Earl of Aylesford's light roan steer by Viceroy; a bull from Mr. Marjoribanks' Blushing Bride, and here exhibited for the first time, wins the first prize in the class—namely, £15 and a silver medal; an extra prize of £20 as the best animal of the breed; the prize of £15 offered by the Earl of Aylesford himself for the best shorthorn, bred as well as fed by the exhibitor; the gold medal, value £20, as the best ox or steer of any breed or age; the Earl of Coventry's silver cup, value £25, as the best ox or steer of any breed or age, bred as well as fed by the exhibitor; and the Hotel and Innkeepers' Plate, value 25 guineas, as the best animal in all the cattle classes, the total winnings of this one beast at this show amounting to more than £122. The first prize for shorthorn cows was won by Sir W. C. Trevelyan's Princess of Yetholm; Messrs. Mitchell's Blue Bell was second; and Mr. J. Whyte's Windsor's Lilac Flower third. There was never such a show of Devons for quality and good points, though they have not taken any of the big honours open to such breeds. Mr. Walter Farthing's grand steer was first in the prize list. The Queen was highly commended. The Devon cows were especially good. A class of half-a-dozen steers comprised Mr. C. Hambro's extremely good animal, which takes the first prize and also the Mayor of Birmingham's extra £10, as the best Devon bred as well as fed by the exhibitor. There were only two specimens of Scotch polled oxen; the best Highland oxen and steers made a fine class of eight.

In the sheep classes (where there was a serious falling-off) the chief prize-takers were Lord Berners, Lord Chesham, Lord Sondes, Lord Walsingham, Sir John Rolt, Messrs. W. Brown, J. Byron, T. R. Casswell, R. N. Morley, R. Hall, J. Baldwin, &c. The pigs numbered about as many as last year, and were of not more than usual excellence. For pens of three fat pigs not exceeding 10 months old, Mr. John Treadwell is first, Mr. T. L. M. Cartwright second, and Her Majesty the Queen third. For pens of three fat pigs, not exceeding 15 months old, Her Majesty won the first prize and the five-guinea cup for the best pigs in the two classes. The second prize was taken by Mr. John Lynn, and the third by Mr. Joseph Clark. The Queen took the third prize for small-bred pigs.

The root show was rather shorter than usual. In the implement department there were 78 exhibitors.

There were upwards of 2,400 pens of poultry and pigeons—the finest exhibition ever held at Birmingham. The first class of poultry, and the most important, so far as the wants of consumers were concerned, were the Dorkings, numbering 300 pens, with, perhaps, fewer bad specimens than usual, the prizes going to the familiar names of Hornby, Arkwright, Crossley, Fox, &c. The following are the weights of a few of the prize birds. The heaviest Aylesbury drake and duck weigh 17lb. 12oz.; the Rouens, 13lbs. 14oz.; the geese of this year's breeding weigh 48lb. 12oz., while their elder brethren reach 57lb. 14oz. the pair. These and the turkeys—the Cambridge variety of this year's breeding weighs 23lb. 12oz., and the one bred previous to this year 34lb. 12oz. —leave no doubt that the introduction of poultry shows has done much to increase and improve the many varieties of fowls.

The Dog Show (the tenth exhibition) was quite up to the standard of previous years. There was a superior representation of the bloodhound breed. Mr. Cowen's Druid, which has won many honours in his day, is past prize-taking now, and yields his place to his own offspring. Most of the dogs that took honours are descendants of Druid, but Druid himself takes none. Mr. Harrison's Dalesman is in the same predicament—the honours which once were his are now given to his young and vigorous rivals. The deerhounds were a capital collection. The greyhounds were not remarkable—they rarely are at Birmingham. The other hounds were few, and so were harriers. There was generally a great deficiency as regards the number of beagles at the Birmingham show, and there was no exception to the rule this year. The fox terriers were a very numerous class. Mr. Cropper's Venture, in the champion class, is a dog of the greatest promise. He was a prize-winner last year, when under a year old, and then inspired predictions with regard to his future which have so far been confirmed this year.

Supplementing the large exhibitions, there were rabbit and canary and chrysanthemum and fruit shows—the former at the Odd Fellow's Hall, the latter at the Town Hall.

The sales of the poultry by Mr. Lythall on Monday realised £779; on Tuesday, £67 10s. On Monday the attendance at the Cattle Show was—by ticket, 4,937; on payment of 5s., 687; at 1s., 1,175. On Tuesday—by ticket, 1,640; on payment of 1s., 6,200. At the Dog Show the attendance on Monday was 2,987, the receipts at the door £176 5s.; the amount realised by the sale of dogs £251 18s. These figures show a great falling off as regards the dog show. On Tuesday there were 5,665 admissions; receipts at the door £249 13s.; sale of dogs, £68 10s. On Wednesday 13,484 people visited Bingly Hall; at the Dog Show the number of admissions was 5,730.

On page 224 we give an Illustration of the interior of Bingley Hall, sketched during the private view. Next week we shall illustrate the oxen, poultry, sheep, pigs, and dogs, from drawings by our special artist.

In the admitted scarcity of clergymen, and the difficulty in obtaining temporary substitutes in cases of incumbents' illness, it has been proposed and talked of in high quarters that the bishops might designate some fit layman to conduct the service, with such modifications as may be necessary, for a fixed number of Sundays, and to follow up that service by the reading of the homilies or specially selected sermons.

ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPERS.—The London correspondent of the *Exeter Flying Post*—a gentleman of very varied information—gossips as follows anent illustrated and other papers:—

> The *Graphic* is to be the title of the fresh rival of the *Illustrated London News*. Its price is to be high—sixpence. Mr. Sutherland Edwards is to be the Editor. He was formerly on the staff of the *Illustrated*, has been theatrical critic of the *Daily Telegraph*, and Polish correspondent of the *Times*, and I hear that he intends to see what can be done by a staff of artists equal at least to the *Illustrated*, and a staff of writers superior to theirs. It will not fail for want of capital, I understand, and that is the main point after all in starting a paper. The proprietor of the *Pall Mall* spent £30,000 before he saw a penny returning, and the proprietors of the *Echo* did not promise themselves a shilling till they had sunk £20,000. The *Echo* is now paying handsomely. You have no conception of the amount of labour or of the cost involved in the publishing of an illustrated paper. "In the first place," says a friend of mine, the Editor of the *Illustraed Midland News*, "the artist must make his sketch, then he, or a draughtsman having special experience of the subject, redraws the sketch upon a prepared block of wood. He must define every detail with care and exactness. When his work is finished the wood holds a high-class drawing, such as might cost you in an ordinary way from five to fifty guineas. It has then to be engraved. Supposing the picture is a large one, the block is divided and placed in the hands of several engravers. They cut the wood with the sharpest of edge tools, into such a shape that the printer can take impressions from it. This process alone for a block the full size of one of our pages cannot be covered, in the most ordinary case, by an expense of less than twenty guineas. Twenty guineas for the mere engraving of a single picture! it is then far from ready to print." This paper, by-the-bye, is pronounced by the *Press News* to be one of the great successes of the day. It started with a circulation of 30,000, and its average varies, I believe, from 15,000 to 20,000. The surprise to me is how it can be published for the money, for both in a literary and artistic point of view it is of the highest class.

NEWS OF THE MIDLANDS.

There will be no ordination for the Oxford diocese this Christmas.

The marriage of Captain Coventry with Lady Evelyn Bruce will take place next week.

Tewkesbury Abbey is to be restored. Subscriptions exceeding £3,000 are promised, and Mr. Gilbert Scott has been asked to prepare plans for the restoration of the choir.

Francis Love was on Tuesday committed for trial by the Wolverhampton Magistrates on a charge of stealing £105 from Mary Plant, and a gold hunting-watch under the circumstances previously reported.

A strike against a proposed reduction of ten per cent. in wages has taken place at the Great Western Cotton Works, Barton Hill, Bristol. Some 1,500 or 1,600 persons have thrown themselves out of employment.

At the Dudley Police-court on Friday William Henry Gotobed, commercial traveller, was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, for embezzling the monies of Mr. James, Wine and Spirit Merchant, Birmingham.

We hear with pleasure that the King of Prussia has conferred upon Mr. J. R. Collis, of Birmingham, the order of the Red Eagle, in recognition of his many and valuable services to the Prussian State. Mr. Collis is the Prussian Consul at Birmingham.

Two performances at the Worcester Music Hall are announced by the local Amateur Dramatic Society, for Thursday and Friday next. The profits will be divided between the City and County Orphan Asylum and the Worcester Artillery Corps.

Last week three dangerous lunatics were taken to the Wolverhampton Workhouse; one died shortly after his admission. There are twenty-two cases of fever in the house—chiefly from Bilston, where there has been a rather serious outbreak of fever.

At a tea-meeting at Whitmore Reans on Thursday, the Rev. J. H. Iles, rector of St. Peter's, and rural dean, announced that the rural deans had held a meeting and resolved to hold prior to Lent a "Mission," similar to that which has just been concluded in London.

The case of the child refered to last week in our article headed "Leaving the Show," was again before the Wolverhampton Guardians on Friday. The girl's mother having asked to have her child returned to her, she will be sent back to Exeter on receipt of the money for the journey.

A mad dog has caused great alarm at Derby and Loughborough. Twenty persons were attacked at Derby on Saturday night, and seriously injured. At Quorndon a builder named Martin was bitten so badly that he is said to be suffering from hydrophobia, which is understood to be prevalent in the midlands.

An extraordinary pig is now being fed by Mr. John Coxon, of the Milton's Head Inn, Derby, which is intended for exhibition at the Christmas show a month hence. It was bred by Mr. Calladine, Rough Heanor, near Mickleover, it is now 22 months old, and weighs more than 36 scores, is 3 ft. 2 ins. high, and 8 ft. 4 ins. in length. The animal's girth is between 7 and 8 feet, and its thickness in a horizontal line at the shoulders is 22 inches.

The Directors of the Midland Railway Company, directly after the late fatal accident near Trent Junction, took measures for the adoption of the block system on the portion of their line between Nottingham and Derby; and but for unforeseen obstacles the arrangements for that purpose would have been completed last week. It is fully expected, however, that this important guarantee of safe public travelling will be brought into operation immediately.—*Derby Reporter*.

Last week two Balliol Open Scholarships were carried off by the Derby School, Mr. Wilson, the late captain, having been elected to one, aud Mr. Coates (son of Mrs. Coates of Derby) to the other. These scholarships are of the value of £75 per annum, and are tenable for four years. They are open to competition by all comers, even members of other colleges. A Balliol Open Scholarship is one of the highest honors that Oxford has to offer. To gain two at one examination is a distinction which has seldom, if ever, fallen to the lot of one school.

MR. BRIGHT AND THE WARWICKSHIRE FARMER.—Our readers may be aware that the Board of Trade requires annual returns from agriculturists of the statistics of their ground crops, acreage, &c. A Warwickshire farmer the other day returned the printed form to Somerset House, filled in with the following remark, in lieu of the statistics required:—"John Bright's instruction to farmers in one of his speeches was 'not to meddle with figures, but to watch the sunshine and showers at home, and not to bother the Government with their affairs.' I will take his advice in this matter.—T. Mann.—Radway, 1869." We are informed that this very *apropos* declaration caused considerable mirth among the *employés* of the department to which it was addressed.—*Birmingham Daily Gazette*.

THE LATE SHOCKING FIRE AT WOLVERHAMPTON.—On Friday the inquest upon the bodies of the four persons who were killed by the explosion of rectified naphtha at the iron braziery works of Messrs. William Evans and Son, Wolverhampton, was brought to a close. Two of the injured women were still unable to attend the inquiry. The Coroner had, however, taken their depositions at the South Staffordshire Hospital. One of them, Maria Farren, showed how the fire commenced. She said that Martha Williams ran for a light to assist in the search for the plug of the tap. She obtained a light in the store room, and then dropped the lighted paper, which set fire to her brown paper apron. From this the fire was communicated to the clothes of Maria Farren. Neither of the women could blame anyone in respect of the accident; though Farren said that early in the day she told the manager of the works, Mr. Bryan, that the plug had come out of the tap. Mr. Bryan denied that she did so. The jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death." They recommended that manufacturers generally should take care that inflammable spirit was stored in a safe position.

On Monday the ceremony of uncovering the bust of the late Mr. William Scholefield, M.P., the first Mayor of the Borough of Birmingham, was performed at the Art Gallery Ratcliffe-place, Birmingham, in the presence of the Mayor and several other gentlemen. Alderman Avery, who gave the bust, made a brief address, and asked the Mayor (Mr. T. Prime) to accept the bust in the name of the inhabitants. Mr. Peter Hollins, of Birmingham is the sculptor.

ACCIDENT TO A DERBY FOOTBALL PLAYER.—On Thursday the 18th ult., a House match between Hutchinson's and the School House was being played on "Bigside." The game was hotly contested, and in the course of a severe "scrimmage" a young gentleman named Lomax got down, with his head bent under his chest, and in this position got trampled on by many of the players. He was picked up insensible, and, with the exception of short intervals of consciousness, he has remained so until the present time. Mr. Lomax was an active, promising young gentleman, 18 or 19 years of age. If he survives (which is still doubtful) it is feared he will be a cripple for life.—*Rugby Advertiser*.

Mr. Hooper, coroner, on Friday held the adjourned inquest at Gold's Green on the body of the young woman Mary Bentley who was killed by the explosion of a boiler at the Great Bridge Iron and Steel Works on the 18th of October. The evidence showed that the boiler had been repaired by Mr. Smith, of Greet's Green, on the day of the explosion, and eighteen new rivets put in, and he considered it perfectly safe. Mr. Marten, engineer, Stourbridge, said he believed the cause of the explosion was simply that frequent repairs had so reduced the strength of the boiler that it was unable to bear even the usual working pressure. The jury returned a verdict to the effect that deceased was killed by the explosion of the boiler, which explosion occurred from the frequent repairs that the boiler had undergone.

MIDLAND MAYORS AND THE BELGIAN KING.—The Mayor of Wolverhampton (T. Bantock, Esq.) was present at the presentation of the address, at Buckingham Palace, on Thursday, to the King of the Belgians, and also at the entertainment given to his Majesty in the evening, in the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House, by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress. Among the other Mayors and gentlemen present at all or some part of the proceedings of the day were the Mayors of Birmingham, Dudley, Bridgnorth, Worcester, Wenlock, and Evesham, the ex-Mayors of Bridgnorth and Worcester, the Town Clerk of Birmingham, Lieut.-Colonel Bagnall, Captain T. Ironmonger, &c. Mr. H. Willis (Sheriff) and Mr. R. Woof (Town Clerk) of Worcester were also present, and had the honour of being presented to his Majesty.

CONSERVATISM IN WEST STAFFORDSHIRE.—There was a very large gathering of Conservatives of West Staffordshire on Friday at Eccleshall. The Rev. G. V. Yonge presided. Mr. Meynell-Ingram, in responding to the toast of "The Members for West Staffordshire," condemned the hasty manner in which the Irish Church Bill was carried through the House of Commons last session, and said that fortunately several important concessions were wrested from Mr. Gladstone by the Lords. He went on to say there was a whisper that the Government had already prepared an Irish Land Bill which would give satisfaction to neither party. If that were true it would go to show that the measure to be submitted next year must be fair and impartial, which would not satisfy extremes, but be really beneficial to Ireland. It was impossible that what was called fixity of tenure or compulsory leases could be the basis of a satisfactory measure, and yet the whole of Ireland seemed bent upon that. It would pave the way to a general confiscation. He thought such a proposition could not be entertained by Government and certainly could not be sanctioned by the House of Commons. The position of the compulsory lease scheme he characterised as being equally objectionable. Upon the question of education Mr. Ingram also spoke, observing that it would be a mistake to divide religion from education.

A CLERGYMAN SENTENCED FOR SIMONY.—In the Court of Arches, on Friday, Sir R. Phillimore proceeded with the case Lee *v.* the Rev. J. J. Merest, for the removal of the defendant as vicar of Upton Snodsbury, Worcester, on the ground of simony, and for having pleaded guilty to an indictment for libel, uttered with the intent to extort money. The defendant did not appear. The Queen's Advocate (Sir Travers Twiss), Mr. Archibald, and Mr. Cowie appeared for the promoter—the Secretary of the Bishop of Worcester. The Queen's Advocate opened the case, and proceeded to call witnesses. The offence of simony was laid under the 12th Anne, cap. 11, sec. 2. The evidence given in court proved that the Rev. Murray Richard Workman purchased of the Rev. Mr. O'Donnell, patron and incumbent of Upton Snodsbury, for £400, the next presentation, and Mr. Merest, the defendant, was soon afterwards presented. Mr. Workman was examined in court, and the conveyance was produced. Afterwards a disagreement took place between Workman and Merest. A criminal proceeding by Workman against Merest for a libel took place, and he pleaded guilty to an indictment for threatening to extort money. Subsequently Workman brought an action against Merest for £350, and judgment was allowed to go by default, execution was issued and only £5 obtained. Messrs. Clarkson, Son, and Greenwell, on the present occasion, appeared for the defendant. Dr. Tristam was for Mr. Workman. The Queen's Advocate and Mr. Archibald addressed the court, and submitted that the case had been proved, and that the Bishop of Worcester had felt it to be his duty to lay the case before his lordship. The prayer, under the statute of 12 Anne, was that the defendant be deprived of holding any living in the Church. His lordship said he had no doubt on the case, but, from its great importance to the Church generally, he would look into the matter and give judgment on Monday. On Monday the Dean of Arches in giving judment, said he considered the two offences proved; and pronounced, nnder the statute of Ann, as well as the General Ecclesiastical Law, the defendant to be a "disabled person" from holding a living; that the presentation be void, and Her Majesty present to the living. The sentence to be published in the church, and the defendant condemned in the costs.

A BIRMINGHAM TRADESMAN CHARGED WITH THEFT.—On Monday Jeffery Babb, general dealer, of Hockley, Birmingham, was charged before the Warwick magistrates with stealing a scarf, valued at 2s. 6d. from the shop of Mr. Gold, clothier. On Friday evening the prisoner went into the prosecutor's shop with two other men, and looked at some scarves, after which they purchased three. They also bought some pocket handkerchiefs, which altogether came to £1, which amount was paid. Immediately after they were gone, prosecutor missed a scarf, which, with another he had shown to the prisoner and his companions while in the shop. The stolen scarf was found on the prisoner, who was remanded (on bail) until Friday.

A bazaar in aid of the Birmingham Homœopathic Hospital was opened at the Masonic Hall on Monday by Mr. Josiah Mason. There is a large supply of useful and ornamental articles, many of which are suitable for presents. The following ladies have charge of the stalls: Mrs. J. B. Chamberlain, Mrs. J. H. Chamberlain, Mrs. Corfield, Mrs. John Smith, Mrs. F. King, Miss King, Mrs. Wynne Thomas, Mrs. William Hudson, Miss Maria Cadbury and Miss Caroline Cadbury, Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Booth, Mrs. H. Robertson, Miss Shakspear and Miss Rock, Mrs. R. L. Chance, Mrs. Holland and Miss Adams, Mrs. Broad and Miss Browning, Mrs. J. Bragg, Mrs. Wilkinson, Mrs. R. Wren and Miss E. Haseler, Mrs. A. Albright, Mrs. E. Lloyd and Miss Impey, Mrs. Lawrence and Miss Buller.

A MINE AGENT LIBELLED BY A BUTTY.—William Lester, butty miner, was charged before the Wolverhampton magistrates on Friday with writing and publishing a false, malicious, and defamatory libel upon Mr. William Blakemore, mine agent of the Osier Bed Colliery, in a letter to his employer, Mr. Sparrow. Mr. H. Underhill, Town Clerk of Wolverhampton, appeared to prosecute, and Mr. Thurstan's defended. Some time ago on defendant leaving the Osier Bed Colliery his account with Mr. Sparrow had to be balanced, and a dispute arose between him and Mr. Blakemore, as the agent to the colliery, as to the amount due to the defendant, who made a claim of between £70 and £80. For this amount Lester had brought an action into the Court of Queen's Bench, and the issue would depend much upon the relative credibility of defendant and Mr. Blakemore. This would show the animus in writing the following letter, which was addressed to, and received by Mr. Sparrow:—

Willenhall, 26th October, 1869.

Sir—Having hitherto been unsuccessful in my efforts to obtain satisfactory settlement of the accounts due to me for the ironstone delivered to your furnaces, in obedience to Mr. Blakemore's directions and as per account rendered, I beg to observe that the unsettled claim is just and correct in all respects, notwithstanding the unmanly and un-Christian denial of the accuracy thereof. Although Mr. Blakemore has been guilty of falsehood and injustice in this matter, he will scarcely have the assurance to deny his own personal liabilities. Will he deny that he has on several occasions, since his appointment to the situation he now holds, under your firm and under various pretexts borrowed considerable sums of money from me, the greater portion of which he has not repaid? I will give you two or three instances out of a many. On one occasion he borrowed £13 10s. to purchase a horse, which he subsequently raffled away at Mr. Page's, Vine Inn, Bilston. On another occasion £5 to meet the payment of his rent, and another time £2. The above sums are now owing by him to me. Respectfully submitting the above for your consideration, as I am determined to have my money,—I am, Sir, your humble servant,—WILLIAM LESTER.

The defenant now apologised, and declared that there was no money owing to him by Mr. Blakemore, and regretted that he had made any statement of the sort. The summons was therefore withdrawn as the letter had been.

A MAD LOVER.—An extraordinary case was before the Coventry magistrates on Monday, when William Wall was summoned for threatening to shoot Laura Ship, described as "a lady-like young woman, about twenty years of age." The parties had "kept company" for three or four years, but their acquaintance had been cooled owing to Wall having suffered imprisonment for an offence committed whilst in the service of the London and North Western Railway Company. A few days ago defendant wrote the subjoined letter to the complainant:

Holly Bush Coventry Monday Nov 15th

To My own Dearest Lawra Ship Now Laura as i have written 2 Letters to you this morning asking your forgiveness which i find you are to hardhearted to give it me But my dear Laura i dont think i have much to be forgiven which i shall tell the Public at Large in another Letter as i shall write for everyone to see how i have been treated by your undutiful mother and i am sure it will come home to her yet and also to you my dearest Laura for not forgiving me for whatever i have done or said it has been your Mother what has caused me to do it But there is a hard pillow for her to Lay her head on and now my dear Laura i think you are using me very bad as you know how dearly i love you and i thought you did me till now and now i cant believe it or you would freely forgive me and you say you will not And now my dear Laura as you and every one else knows how dearly i love you and if i did not you should have the same fate as me and that his that this day will be my last on this earth and it should also be yours to but i love you to much to hurt you, and now my dear Laura i hope when i am gone that no one will ever think so much of you as i have done Only think what my poor mother will do but i cant help it it is you what is causing it and so every one will know and i hope they will make you show the letter as i have sent to you—you know as i have told you that i would lay down my life for you and now i will do it and then those as dont know i love will then And i hope the Lord almighty will receive me into heven with him and his angels and i hope as then as i can appear to you after i am dead & gone but i suppose your mother will be pleased to hear of it well now i cant say any more on this earth to one as i dearly love and am sacrificing my own life for But i hope the blessed lord will receive me and i hope we shall meet again with him so now adu for ever in this world believing me to be

Your affectionate and devoted Lover
For a few more hours in this world,
(Signed) WILLIAM WALL.

God bless you when i am gone But it is you as as done it and no one else,

Mr. Homer said his client had almost lost the power of speech, so terrified was she of defendant's violence, and she had been obliged to sleep at the milliner's establishment where she worked lest she might suffer from defendant's passion if she ventured out. On Wednesday the defendant went to the place where the complainant slept, destroyed a sewing machine worth £9 9s., broke a chair and a poker, and acted the part of a madman. Ultimately, it was arranged between the solicitors that the defendant should enter into his own recognisances for £100, and that his mother should be bound for £50.

The *Evening Mail* publishes the following in a prominent place: "We have heard a statement confidently made in a well informed quarter, that Earl Spencer will be recalled from the Government of Ireland."

THE NEW KEBLE COLLEGE AT OXFORD.—Mr. Edward S. Talbot, of Christ Church, the Warden designate of the new Keble College, at Oxford, has announced that the institution will open in October, 1870, and that he is ready to receive names for entrance. The candidates will have to pass a matriculation examination similar to that which exists at many colleges, and such as will give some security that they will pass in "Little-go" without much additional preparation. There will be rooms for one hundred men. In its composition Keble College will be exactly like those which now exist, drawing its members from all classes and fitting them for all professions. It starts, however, with two special aims, the misapprehension of which has led to some mistakes. It is to be, in the first place, a cheap College, not that it is to outbid all existing attempts to offer cheap education in Oxford, but that it aims at combining the ordinary and well-known advantages of life in a College with a cost lower than is possible at any of the old Colleges. This may be done, Mr. Talbot thinks, both by a lowered scale of College charges, paid as a fixed sum each quarter in advance (this sum would probably be near £70 per annum more or less) and also by such arrangements and disciplinary rules as will make economy easy and extravagance difficult. It will not be in any sense a party College.

POLICE AND LAW COURTS.

THE VALUE OF A DANCING ACADEMY.

Sir W. Bodkin and a special jury have tried a case at the Guildhall, Westminster, with reference to the liability of a parish to compensate an individual owner for compulsory removal. Mr. Hawkins, for the claimant, stated that his client, Miss Birch, was a teacher of dancing, residing at No. 5, Hinde-street, and also carried on her business in Sloane-street. She numbered amongst her pupils duchesses, countesses, viscountesses, both English and Irish, and even archbishops patronised her establishment. (Laughter.) In consequence of the pressure which had for many years past been put upon the parish of St. Marylebone in order to induce them to carry out certain local improvements, they had at length determined, after considerable discussion, to continue Thayer-street into James-street, and so through into Oxford-street. This necessitated the pulling down of No. 5, Hinde-street, the house occupied by the claimant. Miss Birch held that the house under a lease dated the 16th of July, 1852, for 21 years, at a rent of £150. per annum. The lease would therefore not be out until 1873. The lady now claimed from the vestry £4,000 as compensation for loss of business, inconvenience, and extra rent, consequent upon her forced removal. Her average gross receipts would be shown to be nearly £2,000 a year, and this sum was reduced by expenses to about £1,300. Miss Birch having been examined, Sir John Karslake addressed the jury on behalf of the vestry, after which an arrangement was made between the parties that a sum of £1,550 be awarded to plaintiff in satisfaction of all claims.

CAUTION TO LODGING-HOUSE KEEPERS.

Several persons have been summoned before the Clerkenwell magistrates for receiving lodgers in houses not approved and registered according to law. In one case a policeman said he found on the ground floor of the house one double bed with the keeper and one woman lodger, and two old dirty beds on the floor, each with one woman lodger, paying 1s. per week. They had nothing but rags to cover them. The room was very dirty and offensive. This keeper supplies the casual poor with hot water during the day at a charge of one halfpenny each, and if they sit down any time one penny is charged, so that the room is continually occupied by this class of persons. The defendants were variously fined.

"GENTLEMEN" IN TROUBLE.

Two young men, named Charles Joyce and James Lock, said to be "respectably connected," were charged at the Lambeth Police Court, with pulling down the gates in front of several houses in Tulse Hill. A policeman saw them take one gate off its hinges and throw it on the ground, but when he spoke to them they said they were "gentlemen," and could not be guilty of such a thing. In a few moments a servant came up and complained, and the policeman then took them into custody. It was found that nine gates had been thrown down, and that one had been carried some sixty yards away into a field. The practice had, it was stated, been carried on to a considerable extent, and a great deal of damage had been done. Mr. Woolrych said the conduct of the prisoners had been disgraceful, and it was fortunate for them that all the persons whose gates had been thrown down had not come forward to complain, or he should have dealt with them in each case. He would, therefore, only convict on the one charge, and order them to pay a fine of £5 each and the damage, or two months' imprisonment.

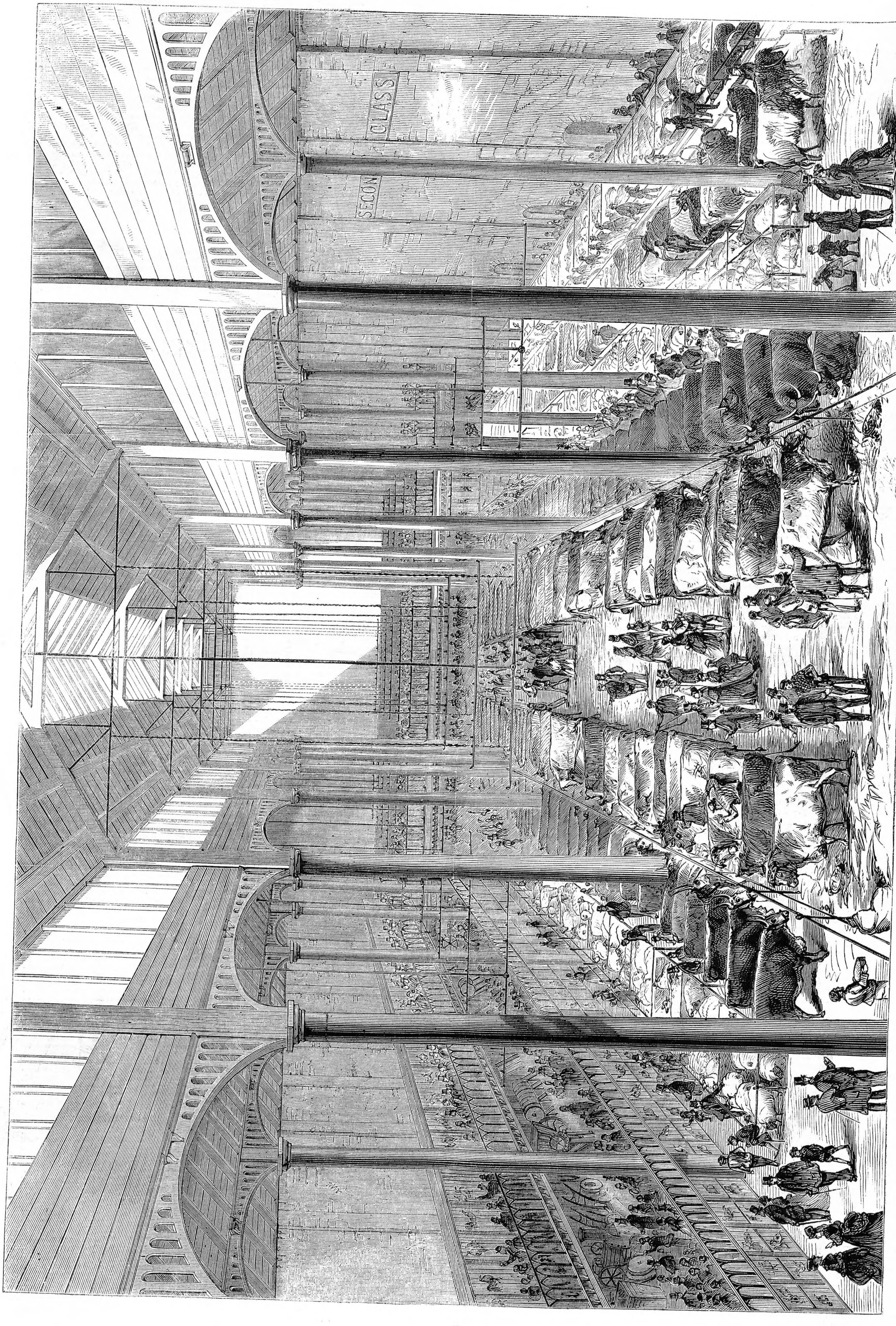
JUST SENTENCES.

At the Central Criminal Court, Michael Herring, aged twenty-four, and John Williams, aged sixteen, were charged before Mr. Justice Brett with committing an outrage upon a woman named Webb, in an empty house in Spitalfields. The woman was afterwards taken to the Workhouse, and it appeared from the medical testimony that she was suffering from delirium tremens. About three weeks after her admission she jumped out of a window, and received injuries which eventually resulted in her death. The Jury convicted both prisoners; and Herring, who had previously been convicted of highway robbery with violence, was sentenced to fourteen years', and Williams to ten years' penal servitude.—A man named Foskett was convicted of wounding and attempting to murder a young woman named Talbot, whom he had been courting for some time, and sentenced to fifteen years' penal servitude.—A young man named White was convicted of knocking a man down in the Westminster Bridge-road, and, with the assistance of some companions, robbing him of his watch and chain. He was sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour, and to receive twenty-five lashes with the cat.

CAUTION TO INCENDIARIES.

At the Central Criminal Court, on Friday, John Cusack was tried for setting fire to his house, with intent to defraud two insurance companies. Prisoner kept the Dolphin, in Redcross street, Southwark, and an alarm of fire was given at two in the morning, the place having been closed three hours. Assistance fortunately came very quickly; the firemen got inside, and extinguished the flames. They then found the place fired in fourteen different places, and the furniture and fittings saturated with paraffin. Prisoner was found guilty, and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude.

EXTRAORDINARY CURE OF A COUGH BY POWELL'S BALSAM OF ANNISEED.—"Her Majesty's Gun Boat "Netley," Wick, North East Coast of Scotland, 7th September, 1868.—Dear Sir,—Having had a most distressing and severe cough, which caused me many sleepless nights and restless days, I was recommended by his Lordship, the Earl of Caithness, to try your most invaluable Balsam of Anniseed, and I can assure you, with the first dose I found immediate relief, even without having to suspend my various duties; and the first small bottle completely cured me; therefore I have the greatest confidence in fully recommending it to the million. Most respectfully yours, W. LINZEE, H.M.G.B. "Netley."—To Mr. Powell. POWELL'S BALSAM OF ANNISEED can be had of all Chemists. In Bottles at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 3d. Warehouse, 16, Blackfriars Road, London. Ask for "POWELL'S BALSAM OF ANNISEED." [267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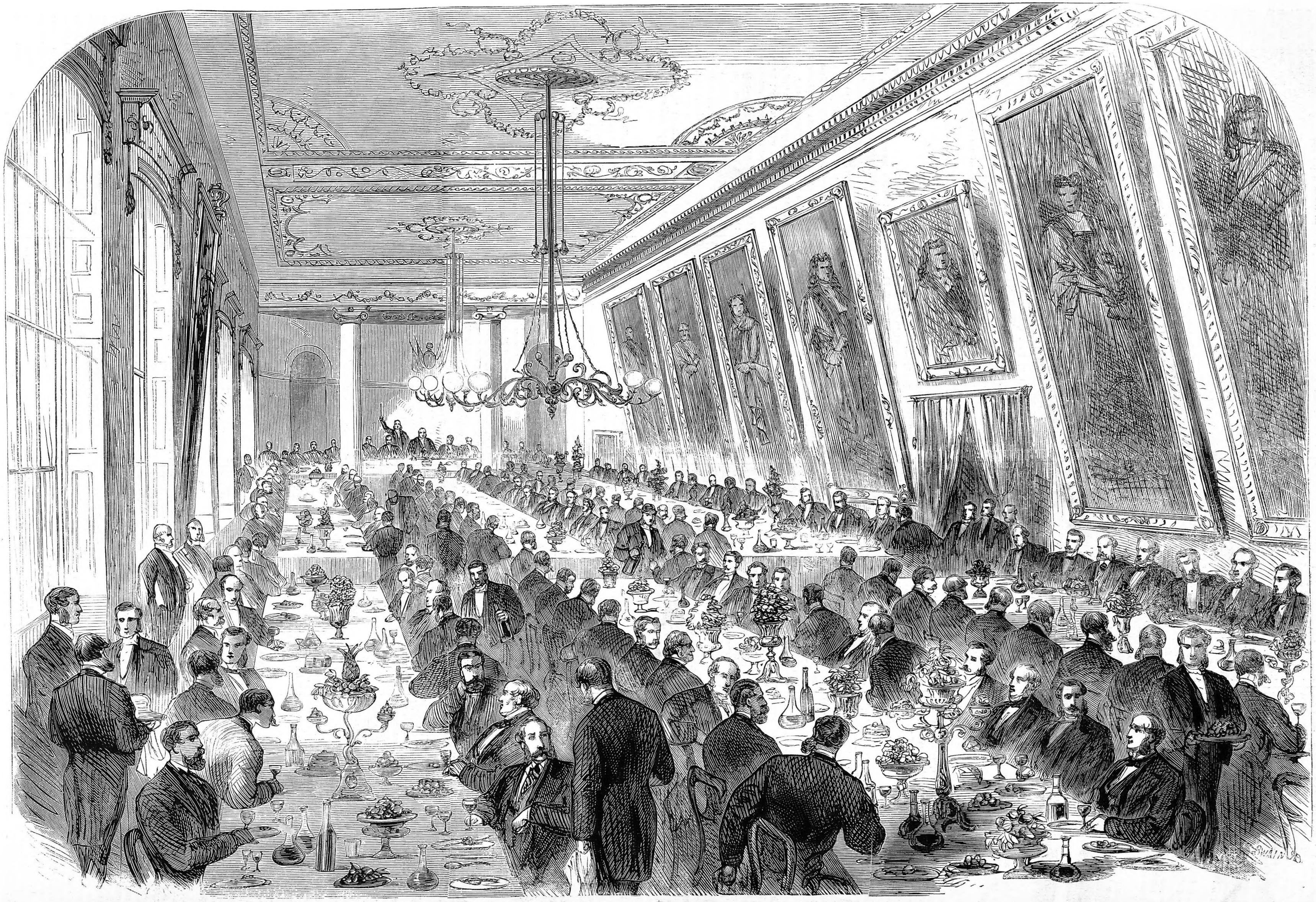
CLASS

THE BIRMINGHAM CATTLE SHOW: BINGLEY HALL. (*See page 222*).



THE MAYOR'S BREAKFAST AT WORCESTER: INTERIOR OF THE GUILDHALL. (*See page 218*).

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

"Quantity, not quality," seemed the motto at Warwick last week; still, nearly three hundred horses ran, either on the flat, across country, or over hurdles, and the season was brought to a close with great *éclat*. Even now that we are well into December, some flat races are advertised at Bromley, and certain clerks of courses seem determined that though two-year-olds may not begin early, they shall, at any rate, work late. Old Indigestion, who has done little enough since he carried off the Lincoln Handicap last year, won a welter race, but his performance was quite thrown into the shade by Border Knight's victory in the Great Autumn Welter Cup on the following day. The latter carried 11 st., and gave weight to everything in the race except Paganini. Judging by this race, many writers have argued that because Pero Gomez gave Border Knight 32 lbs. and a head beating in the Houghton Meeting, he must be a great horse. We cannot, however, forget how the moderate Martyrdom stuck "Pero" in the Leger; and moreover, though Border Knight has won several welters, he has always performed badly under racing weights. Robespiere (10 st. 4 lbs.) and Cocoanut (2 st. 12 lbs.) were unplaced in the Autumn Cup; the former has been amiss for some time, and will yet win a good race, but the latter ought to have done better. Miss Dayrell was the best animal that ran during the week, and her performance in the Guy Cup was a very fine one; though the Amaranth colt, who had a great chance of beating her, was never in the race, owing to a very bad start. Hymen (5 st. 10 lbs.) placed another good handicap to Voltigeur's credit, and Mr. Johnstone fittingly closed the year of his Two Thousand and Derby triumphs by running first and second. The forward position obtained by Argyle (7 st. 1 lb), ought to improve Sunlight's position in the Derby betting, as Mr. Merry's horse beat him at level weights last week. Lily stole the Bradgate Cup from Lord Hawthorn in the last stride, and with the easy victory of the Amaranth colt over Robespiere, the season of 1869 came to an end.

Mr. Pryor's sale took place on Monday last; but as Mansitta (1,350 guineas), Cardinal York (750 gs., Sagittarius 250 gs.), and Knight Errant (120 gs.) were bought in, it is probable that we have not seen the last of the "Mexican blue." It seemed unwise not to sell Mansitta on such favourable terms, as the King of Trumps seldom improves, and Bonnie Katie, her own sister, who was a very fair two-year-old, has gone all to pieces this year. Almost the same may be said of Roma (700 gs.), who was very well sold, as was the gelding Grimston (400 gs.), for he has done nothing lately, though, when a two-year-old, he ran three very desperate races with Lady Elizabeth. The six yearlings averaged about 210 gs. The St. Albans—Bay Celia filly, own sister to The Duchess, and half-sister to The Duke, The Earl, and The Baron, made 400 gs.; and a Saunterer—Gratitude filly was knocked down for the same price; a half-brother to Cambuscan fetched 200 gs. The twenty-eight lots realised 3,880 gs., a most satisfactory total at this dead season. The meeting of clerks of courses, &c., which has given rise to so much curiosity, passed off very quietly, and the only business done was the adoption of a resolution to petition the Jockey Club to reconsider their new rule with regard to selling races.

The Newmarket Coursing Meeting unfortunately clashed with the Warwick fixture; but, in spite of this, the attendance was large. The great drawback was the scarcity of hares, and at one time it seemed probable that the meeting would not be concluded on Saturday. In the second round of the Champion Stakes The Bagman received a terrible dressing from Honest Meg, and he is evidently an over-rated dog. Johnny Daley's Maid Marian won three courses in good style, and was then beaten, in a very unlucky trial, by Cousin Bab. Finally, Jealousy and Pandora were drawn, the former lame, and the latter in favour of Pauline, by Tornado—Bertha, who beat Cousin Bab, by Racing Hopfactor—Becca, most decisively in the final course. The performances of the winner are wonderful, as she divided the Oaks at Ashdown, for which sixty-seven ran, and won the Ladies' Plate at Amesbury, prior to this victory, Old Saucebox, the Newmarket crack, showed in fine form in the All Aged Stakes, but was beaten by S.S. in the deciding course. The Chippenham Stakes fell to Happy Joe, by Ridley—Hawthorn, and Margaret, by Banjo—Trovatore, took the Cheveley Stakes. At the Heckington (Lincolnshire) Open Meeting the Howard Stakes and a bracelet were divided between Ellen the Fair and Caydippe, and Patent scored another win with Patchwork, in the Covent Garden Cup. Schoolmaster and Letchford, own brothers by Banjo—Kitty, divided the Members' Plate; and Lady, by Portland from Old Chloe, beat Horniblow, by Portland—Malicious, for the Six Hundreds Cup.

In spite of another adverse judgment, it is said that Kelly will not abandon his law-suit with Sadler, and the case is to come before the House of Lords. It seems a sad pity to carry the matter further, and to incur more expense, as there can be no chance that the three decisions already given will be reversed.

CHINESE METAL WORK.

The metallic alloys employed by the Chinese, as well as their productions in various metals, such as bells, mirrors, gongs, and especially bronzes, and their methods of gilding, inlaying, and otherwise ornamenting metallic surfaces, have always presented considerable interest for scientific and practical men, but the subject has invariably been surrounded with difficulty from the fact that practical men with sufficient scientific knowledge have rarely visited China, and when they have done so the difficulty of obtaining admission to the workshops and factories has been found almost insurmountable.

Our neighbours on the other side of the Channel have of late paid great attention to Chinese matters, and are pursuing their study of the literature of that country with great determination, while the bronzists and manufacturers of china and *faïences* of France are drawing largely from Chinese sources for both their forms and decoration.

A happy combination has thrown much light upon the subject of Chinese arts. M. Stanislaus Julien, perhaps the most eminent Chinese scholar in Europe, has collected and translated from native works all the accounts he could find of Chinese arts and manufactures, and M. Paul Champion, a chemist attached to the imperial technical institutions in Paris, has been to China with the special object of comparing those accounts, as far as possible, with the methods employed by the Chinese of the present day. He had great difficulties to overcome in order to obtain admission to the workshops, but he generally succeeded and has collected a large amount of useful and interesting information. The labours of these two gentlemen have been embodied in a volume of 250 pages.[*]

It has been generally supposed that the Chinese have lost many of their arts, but M. Champion declares that his examination of the workshops and study of the ancient accounts of Chinese authors have convinced him that such is not the case, but, on the contrary, that the processes which are now employed are precisely the same as they were centuries ago, and that consequently the study of these processes reveals the secrets of the manufacture of the much-admired ancient productions. This opinion of an able and evidently conscientious man gives practical interest to the work in question.

For the present, at least, we shall confine ourselves to the metal manufactures.

The Chinese make use of a great number of alloys, of which the composition varies with the objects for which it is employed. Sometimes these are composed of copper and tin, in which case the work is hammered while still at an elevated temperature; some are composed of copper and zinc, and some of a mixture of various metals with arsenic; the last alloys are called Pethong or white copper, which is highly sonorous but very difficult to work, and consequently objects composed of it are relatively high in price.

Bells are made in China of bronze and of cast iron; those which are specially designed for the imperial palaces are, according to native accounts, made of the following composition:—

Copper	47,000 pounds
Tin	4,000 do.
Gold	50 ounces
Silver	120 do.

M. Champion was fortunate enough to witness the casting of an iron bell and some other objects at Hang Keon. The bell was about six feet high; the mould was formed of beaten clay powdered within with charcoal dust and dried in the sun. It was composed of three rings, or circular sections with a core; the metal was first poured into the lower ring, thirty or forty pounds at a time only, and another section of the mould was only added when the former was filled. This rude method yielded a very good result, the exterior of the bell was well moulded and its tone good. The iron broken small and mixed with charcoal was melted in large clay crucibles, with tripod stands, a blast being introduced below from a blowing box, consisting of a rectangular case containing two like shaped wooden pistons worked by hand; the molten metal having run down to the bottom of the crucible the latter was tilted forward and the metal poured into an iron pot lined with fire-clay and from that into the mould. Three crucibles were kept going at once, but it took a whole night to complete the casting of the bell. In the same foundry M. Champion saw a number of iron pots and basins cast, which, he says, are quite as well made as those of Europe; these are almost the only kind of metal utensils used in Chinese kitchens.

As in the old times in Greece and Rome the Chinese employ metal principally for their mirrors, which are generally formed of an alloy of copper and tin in equal proportions; the surface of the metallic plate is then amalgamated with quicksilver, and a brilliant surface produced by friction. In ancient times mirrors intended for the imperial palace were composed of copper and silver, and the surface produced by means of powdered cinnabar.

Mirrors are much used in China, and their production consequently forms an important industry. Some are made of glass, but flint glass is little known in China, and that which is used is quite unfitted for the purpose, consequently bronze mirrors are much in vogue as they have great reflecting power and are made with much care. The alloy used has been carefully analysed, and found to be formed as follows:—

Copper	50·80
Tin	16·50
Zinc	30·50
Lead	2.20
	100·00

The bronze bodies are often cast with figures in relief on the back. The Chinese and Japanese are very skilful in casting metals, they have no steam engines at their disposal, no rolling mills, but they prepare their moulds with great care and ability, and produce beautiful and extremely thin castings. The bronze disc being filled up to a perfect surface, the polishing is performed with a powder similar to emery, and finished with charcoal and water. When all is completed, an amalgamation is composed as follows:—

Tin	69·36
Lead	0·64
Mercury	30·00
	100·00

It is laid on by means of a leather and rubbed energetically for a long time. When the surface has been well prepared, and the amalgamation carefully executed, these mirrors have a very brilliant reflecting surface; this becomes dimmed, however, after a few months and then the amalgamation is repeated.

Magic mirrors, or transparent mirrors as the Chinese call them, are a toy which has greatly puzzled Europeans, who have been unable to solve the riddle; at the back of these magic mirrors are raised or other figures of dragons, flowers, &c., and when the mirror is set in the sun these figures become visible on the surface. We need scarcely say that they are not transparent, but the explanation is interesting. The same figures which appear at the back are cut deeply into the face of the mirror, and the parts cut out filled with copper or bronze of an inferior quality to the rest of the mirror; the reunion of the two is rendered perfect by means of heat, and the mirror is then polished and finished in the usual way. The different qualities of the metal having different reflective powers, the figures, when the reflection of the mirror is thrown upon a wall or other screen, appear darker than the surrounding parts.

The metal used for coins consists of six or seven parts of copper and three or four parts of zinc; of course a great part of the zinc is carried off when it comes into contact with the melted copper, in the form of oxide. The metal used for coins in past times contained also lead and tin. The coins were cast in moulds, which were powdered with fine pulverised porcelain.

We may mention here a curious fact concerning zinc, namely, that it was not known, or not used, in China before 1600; the late appearance of this metal in industry in the East as well as in the West is a very strange coincidence. It seems to have been first derived from Japan, as the Chinese call it Japanese lead.

Chinese bronze, properly so called, is composed as follows:—

Copper	1 pound
Tin	1-30th of an ounce.
Lead	1-60th ,,

But other alloys are in frequent use, in which there is more lead, or more tin, or both.

A very beautiful green bronze is produced by the mixture of

Copper	100 parts.
Tin	30 ,,
Gold	100th of an ounce.

When vases composed of this alloy are finished, they are steeped in a mixture of vinegar, verdigris, and water, and assume a beautiful green colour. Ordinary bronze is often treated in the same manner, or exposed to the vapour of burning sulphur.

The method of making the well-known gongs, or *tam-tams*, as they are called in China, has always been a riddle to Europeans, who have never yet succeeded in producing gongs equal to those of China. M. Champion, after infinite trouble, got admission into a tam-tam shop, and his account of the mode of manufacture is very interesting. The superiority of the Chinese gongs seems to result almost entirely from the peculiar manner in which they are hammered. The broken pieces of the gongs (and they are easily broken when struck too hard and near the centre) are carefully collected and used in the making of new ones; these pieces are heated to a dead red colour, when they become brittle on cooling, and are broken up small. The pieces are mixed with filings and clippings and melted in clay crucibles, exactly like ours, containing six or eight pounds of the metal only. These crucibles are placed in a small furnace, large enough to contain two at a time, and the fuel used—a kind of hard coal resembling anthracite—is piled around the crucibles with great care, by means of tongs. When the metal is melted it is weighed, and then returned to the crucible and remelted; when again in a liquid state it is stirred to render it homogenous, and the oxide removed by means of an iron hook. The mould employed is an iron disc mounted on stones, and around the edge of the disc is laid a piece of clay, rolled by hand to about an inch diameter, which forms the side of the mould. The disc is rubbed with pea oil, then sprinkled with fine sand, and covered with a conical cap of baked clay, and having a hole at the top through which a funnel is introduced; the cap rests on the clay ring and protects the workmen from splashes, while at the same time it prevents the bronze cooling too quickly. Moreover, the disc being always hot, the casting remains a considerable time in the liquid state. When the bronze is set the cover and clay ring are removed, and the metal, still red, and forming a disc less than half an inch thick, is brushed on both sides with a kind of wooden broom to remove the impurities, and is immediately placed on a cast iron disc, about six inches thick, and ten to twelve inches in diameter, and laid on a block of wood. It is then beaten with a spherical headed hammer with a long and very flexible bamboo handle, which allows of heavy but not dull blows being given. While the hammer is wielded by one man another turns the disc about with a pair of pincers; this operation leaves the bronze dished to the extent of two or three inches to a diameter, or fourteen inches in diameter. The disc is then heated in a coal furnace with a strong blast, being carefully watched and twined all the time to make it equal all over; when it attains a dull red heat it is withdrawn from the fire, and placed on a large cube of cast iron, which serves for an anvil, and on which it is hammered by five men. Three only of the hammermen strike in regular succession and with all their power; the two others strike alternately also, but with heavier hammers, the fireman turning and directing the work with pincers. The precision with which these men work together on a small object with heavy hammers is described as remarkable. Another heating and a second heavy hammering bring the metal nearly to its proper form, the condition of the gong being known by the sound which it gives out under the hammer.

After this, five or six gongs in the same condition are put one within the other, and hammered together in order to render them uniform. Only three heavy hammers are now used, two men beating with wooden mallets with flat faces. This operation lasts perhaps three quarters of an hour, even for small gongs. They are then separated, and each again hammered by itself. The edges are then clipped by means of a kind of fixed chisel. In this state the metal has become very brittle, the parings break easily in the hand, and the gongs are therefore heated to redness and plunged in water for a few seconds; any kind of water (say the Chinese) answers for this tempering.

When annealed, the gongs are scrubbed hard with rag and salt and water, which leaves a slight coating of salt on the metal. They are again heated, being turned all the time that they are in the furnace, and the central portion finished on the anvil. They are then again heated, but only around the edge, and with great care, an iron cover being placed over the gong while heating. This cover is lifted from time to time by a labourer, in order that the fireman may watch and turn the gong. The curve of the edges is now to be completed, and this operation requires great dexterity, for one false blow would ruin the work. When this is done, the work is heated for the last time, plunged into cold water for a few minutes, and afterwards beaten sharply with a wooden mallet to remove all incrustation and foreign matters.

But this is not all. A workman now places the gong on the ground, and using one hammer to strike with and another as an anvil, completes the shape of the border; and after this, another, who uses a short hammer, with a head weighing about a pound, and having two round faces (hemispherical probably is meant). This last hammering is always commenced in the centre, and continued in concentric rings till the whole has been treated in the same manner, and sometimes it is repeated in lines radiating from the centre; the marks are frequently to be seen in finished gongs. The workman strikes very vigorously, but with an elastic wrist, causing the hammer to rebound, so that the shock of the blow may not be too prolonged. The operation requires great experience; gongs are sometimes cracked during the operation, and are at once thrown with the old metal. The last touch is put to the gongs by scraping them with steel tools, always from the centre towards the circumference, and either entirely, or only a certain portion, according to their destination. Before they are sent out for sale their tone is carefully tried. They differ in tone, of course, not only according to their size and thickness, but also to the extent and care in the hammering. The Chinese class them under two general heads of male and female tone, the former resulting from a greater amount of hammering than the latter.

Old analyses on gongs coming from China only revealed the presence of copper and tin, but a second and very careful analysis gives the following result:—

Copper	82·00
Tin	17·20
Iron	1·00
Nickel	a trace
	100·00

The nickel is not discoverable unless the analysis is made upon a certain quantity of the metal.

Few people, perhaps, had heretofore a much better notion of the manufacture of gongs than the sailor had who said that to make a gun you had only to take a hole and put a lot of iron round it; but it will be seen by the above account that it is really one of the most delicate instances of the manipulation of metal. The gongmakers' shops are very systematically conducted, and the men, who are bound to produce a certain number in a given time, receive half a piastre, or 2s. 3d. a day, and the foreman or fireman twice that sum—very high wages for China. The importance of the trade arises from the fact that gongs are used in all religious and public fêtes, marriages, funerals, &c., and on the occasion of visits from all mandarins of a certain degree of rank. Very fine gongs, three to four feet in diameter, are said to be made in Cochin China. A magnificent one was shown in the Japanese department of the Paris Exhibition of 1867; it was suspended, as usual, and struck by means of a heavy piece of wood slung in front of it. Small gongs require care; if struck with too much force, and near the centre, they are easily cracked. They should be struck towards the edge, so as to produce a succession of moderate vibrations.

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[*] *Industries anciennes et modernes de l'Empire Chinois, &c.*—Paris: Eugène Lacroix.

The Engineers' report on the flaws in the granite colums states that the Holborn Viaduct is perfectly safe for traffic.

The latest money-making operation is that of a gang of boys in Portland, Mobile, who have been caught stealing bones from the cemeteries and selling them at the bone mill.

The *Echo* is authorised to state that the rumour which the *Pall Mall Gazette* published on Friday, that Mr. Disraeli was to be made a Knight of the Garter, is entirely without foundation.

The *Freeman's Jouanal* gives a rumour that the Government intend at once sending strong reinforcements into the country. There are at present in Ireland 24,000 troops of all branches of the army.

The photograph of Erdington Orphange, from which we engraved our picture last week, and Mr. Mason's portrait in No. 1, were taken by Mr. Penn, Birmingham; not, as stated last week, by Mr. Sunderland.

Bishop Wilberforce will be enthroned at Winchester on Thursday, the 16th inst. On the Monday following that day his lordship hopes to hold, through the kindness of Bishop Sumner, a levee at Farnham Castle.

The *North British Daily Mail* states that the Rev. Nr. Stern, the Abyssinian missionary, recently identified Prince Bouba Workey, a son of King Theodore, exhibiting in Wombwell's menagerie at Dundee.

The Birmingham Theatres continue to attract large audiences. At the Royal Mr. Simpson has produced "Formosa," which is a great success, as was expected; and at the Prince of Wales Mr. Swanborough's excellent company have been playing "Dreams," &c., and the funny burlesque, "The Pilgrim of Love."

Last week large placards announced that "the world renowned tenor, Mr. S. Reeves" would appear in Stirling on Saturday first. Various inquiries in regard to the matter were made to Mr. J. F. Crawford, bookseller, who telegraphed to Mr. Reeves, asking whether he would appear as announced. The following reply was received from Mr. Sims Reeves:—"Queen's Hotel, Manchester.—I authorise you to contradict, by advertisement, my appearance in Stirling on Saturday first. It is a gross imposition. I am singing here on that evening. Will send you post-office order for expenses."

NOTES ON THE JOURNALS.

To what sect or denomination did Mr. Peabody belong? The question seems an idle one to ask when the philanthropist is lying cold in his coffin, but the query has been put and answered. Mr. Charles Reed, M.P., was one of Mr. Peabody's executors, and he writes as follows: "Take my word for it, our late departed friend was a Congregationalist of our own order. I closed his eyes in death."

Literature has especial reason to be proud of the author of "My Novel," and "The Last Days of Pompei." Bulwer Lytton—we like to preserve the old name—has written as much as any living author, and he has besides achieved distinction as a statesman. Now they say he is to have the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, which Lord Derby's death made vacant. Lord Lytton, we must not forget, founded British Columbia and Queensland, and thus has "done the State some service, and they know it." He is a Conservative; but the Premier has gracefully forgotten Politics in his regard for Art, and everybody will applaud him for his bestowal of the vacant Order upon the famous literary statesman.

Some gentlemen have been advertising in the *Times* for a haunted house, which one would have thought the last requirement of society. If report is to be credited, however, these gentlemen are members of the Dialectical Society, who desire, so the advertisement states, to make some "philosophic investigations"—in other words, they are on the look-out for ghosts. Are there any haunted houses in the Midlands which no one will take on that account? If so, here is an opportunity for the owners. Let them write immediately to the Dialectical Society, stating terms and the number of ghosts that have been seen on their premises. Long ago, we could have referred the advertisers to several houses possessing the reputation of being haunted, and in which apparitions were frequently seen by small boys going and returning from school.

It is not in mortals to command general approbation any more than they can secure success. Witness the case of Pére Hyacinthe. The Carmelite Monk who used to enchain all religious and fashionable Paris, and whose conventual dwelling was wont to be besieged by the faithful, has lost the good opinion of many who were his warmest admirers by attending the Jewish Synagogue at New York. They have adopted an extraordinary mode of revenge—that of circulating a report that Father Hyacinthe went to America to marry a rich Boston widow, and that he does not mean to return to France. The Father will not, we should think, take much notice of these spiteful attacks upon his moral honesty. His detractors are too insignificant to require crushing. Those less fortunate than Pére Hyacinthe in winning the world's favour may solace themselves with the reflection that Calumny, like Rumour, has a thousand tongues, which are never silent.

There were few abler lawyers than the recently-deceased Mr. Justice Hayes, who did not survive that paralytic stroke which attacked him even ere he had donned his judicial robes at Westminster. Never making a great noise in the world, the late judge was well known for his legal acumen and his wit, and enjoyed the high esteem of his colleagues on the Bench and at the Bar. The recollection of Mr. Justice Hayes's humour makes the *Telegraph* ask how it is that the law has produced so many witty men. The writer cites Lord Robertson—"Pat Robertson," as he was called—as a judge who "had wit and humour enough to keep a whole county in a roar of laughter from one year's end to another;" and, referring to the horror which was caused in Edinburgh one day when his lordship appeared as the author of a volume of sentimental poetry, quotes Lockhart's epitaph upon him, written at the dinner table at Lord Robertson's request:—

> "Here lies the peerless paper lord, Lord Peter,
> Who broke the laws of God and man and metre."

There has just ended in London what has been called the Twelve Days' Mission. Originating with the High Church party, but not altogether a Ritualistic movement, this mission has drawn together on twelve days a very large number of religious enthusiasts, actuated, we may safely say, by a desire to spread the truths of Christianity. About a hundred churches were opened on each of those twelve days; there were frequent short services, with sermons; and the devotions appear to have been distinguished by all that zealous heartiness which marks the High Church party just as earnestness and zeal are prominent amongst Dissenters. The revival does not appear to have been in any way objectionable: its most unusual feature was the marching round, at one or two of the churches of the congregation in penitential guise, carrying tapers which had been previously "blessed" by the officiating clergyman. This savours more of the Roman than the Protestant Church, and must excite the anger of both Low and Broad Churchmen. With this exception, the Twelve Days' Mission has been generally approved. What the results of the revival will be we shall wait anxiously to see.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

A laborious work of astronomical history has just been completed by Mr. Williams, the Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society of London. The all-recording Chinese have ever been most careful in chronicling strange appearances in the sky; and scattered through their official diary are numbers of entries of comets, eclipses, falling stars, and abnormal celestial apparitions. Mr. Williams, who is an expert in Chinese literature, has waded through 300 volumes that compose the history of the Empire between 613 B.C. and 1640 A.D., and extracted every observation of what appears to have been a comet. He has thus unearthed descriptions of cometary visits to the skies of China to the number in all of about 370. The value of these records to science depends much upon the accuracy with which the comet's position in the heavens are defined; and in some cases these can be well identified, for the Celestials very carefully divided the stars into groups or "asterisms," which are analagous to, though of course not identical with, our constellations. A Chinese atlas of the skies compared with any of our modern ones enables these asterisms to be identified with the European system of star nomenclature, and dates can be easily converted; so when there is record of a bearded star appearing on such a day of such a moon in such an asterism, we have a roughly accurate observation that may turn out of value to cometary astronomy. Mr. Williams has translated the descriptions of the comets into English, and given their positions, refound, to our maps of the heavens. He found the entries in the history very precise and straightforward; droll sometimes in expression, but honest and free from superstitious inferences and allusions. The French astronomer Biot did a work of this kind some time ago, but not so completely or extensively as Mr. Williams has done his.

Another Chinese item. At last week's meeting of the Geographical Society, a paper by Mr. Ney, Elias, was read on the course which the great Yellow River had taken since it left its old one some fifteen years ago. Forsaking its bed several hundred miles from its mouth, and pouring its waters in a northerly direction, it now finds an outlet in the sea at a point four degrees from its former embouchure. The old bed, two or three miles wide, now formed a high road; but the lands along it were deprived of their fertility by the loss of the means of irrigation. The devastation caused by the diversion of course extended over scores of square miles, and death to millions of people had been one of the consequences. A smaller river, the Ta-tsing, has received the great one as a tributary; and the increased volume and rapidity thus imparted to it are causing its narrow bed to widen—streets of towns and villages, gardens and fields, being swept away with the undermined banks. Nine such changes in the river's course are mentioned in the Chinese annals, the first dating about 602 B.C. Artificial embankment, such as the country is capable of, has been tried in some parts, but ineffectually. European engineering is wanted for the job.

The door of a new industry is opened by an announcement to the effect that plaster of Paris may be prevented from "setting" so rapidly as it does, and at the same time caused to harden to an ivory-like consistency, by simply adding to it, when mixed, from two to four per cent. of finely pulverised althea-root (marsh-mallow). The great drawback to the extended utility of Paris-plaster has been its speedy hardening; it never gave time to the artist using it for any moulding or fashioning: it must be mixed and placed *in situ* in a minute. With the above tempering it remains plastic for an hour; and when it does dry it is so toughly hard that it can be filed, cut, drilled, carved, and made into trinkets and useful articles for which its employment in the usual condition is out of the question. Eight per cent. of the althea-root still further retards the hardening, but the tenacity is proportionately increased. The composition then formed is of marble-like consistency; indeed with proper colouring excellent imitation of marble may be produced by it, and the surface will take a high polish. The hitherto fragile and much-abused, though often beautiful, plaster casts of the image sellers ought to rise to a higher dignity from this invention.

An interesting account appears in the Journal of the "Association Scientifique de France" of the process of formation of the great statue of Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde, the largest work of art hitherto produced by electro-metallurgy. Great indeed it is, for it contains metal to the weight of fifteen thousand kilogrammes (about fourteen tons), one-fourth part of which consists of copper deposited electrically; the rest being made up of the supports, ties, and bearings for holding the parts together and giving rigidity to the figure. The work was of course done piecemeal: the model was in plaster, and it was divided into fragments for convenient deposit of the metal by the galvanic process. The parts were enveloped with a skin of gutta percha some centimetres thick, which was carefully black-leaded to give it a conducting surface; and iron stays were placed to support the sections during the copper-plating operations. Stupendous baths of sulphate of copper solution had to be prepared; they contained 4,500 litres of fluid, and the quantity of the salt dissolved in such a body of water amounted to 9,000 kilogrammes. Porous cells of surprising magnitude had to be constructed; for some of the parts required a zinc surface of 22 square yards. The thickness of copper deposited was upon the average a tenth of an inch, and the surface of the statue was equal to 125 square yards. Much strengthening was required, and it was gained by first soldering plates of iron to various parts of the backs of the pieces, and then uniting these plates by a series of iron rods: the joints of the segments were soldered up, and the consolidating bars were connected with a central column composed of eight bars of T iron firmly braced together. The work was done at Christofle's famous atelier. The scanty outline we are constrained to give hardly does the subject justice: all who are interested in the electrical working of metals should try and see the original account.

OCCASIONAL LETTERS.

Dear Mr. Editor,—A gratifying thing that my first letter should have appeared simultaneously with an act of grace and commercial acumen at Worcester. The Board of Guardians of the "faithful city" responded to your application and ordered that the official advertisements of the Board should be published in the *Illustrated Midland News*. It was the right thing to do. The Guardians will get value for their money; but people do not always do the right thing. Through you, sir, I venture to congratulate the Worcester Board, and I feel assured that when you apply to the other Midland Boards they will all in good time come to you. If the Birmingham, and other Guardians, chose to do so voluntarily and at once, they will give evidence of their practical wisdom. There are other official bodies which might show their appreciation of what is being done for the Midlands. The *Gazette* hoped the *Illustrated* would succeed "for the credit of the town" in which it is printed. The great public of Birmingham, the wealthy middle class, and the intelligent artisan and worker; these, sir, are showing the highest regard for your great undertaking. Some of the Iron Princes, too, are alive to the importance of what is being founded, and they will all flock to your standard by-and-by. You have chosen to regard Birmingham as the Metropolis of the Midlands. The Midlands have responded heartily. You are as much a local paper in Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, Shropshire, the Black Country, and other surrounding districts, as you are in Birmingham. Herein lies the secret of your success. What is more, the general interest of your illustrations makes you looked for in London, and especially by Midlanders. This is giving the paper a London position, and will justify your branch publishing office in town. There, sir! I think these are points which you will not object to my heralding. I suppose you will say, that writing from town I had better have confined myself to my subject. I know your cynical way. I am not to bother, but go on with what news I have to tell? Very well, sir, as you pay for it I suppose you have some little right to command.

How is the Langham Hotel doing? Very well indeed, Mr. Illustrated. The original capital was £350,000; the present proprietors swamped that and started a new company with about £160,000. This new proprietary having all the benefit of the old expenditure are reaping a profit of 10 per cent. That is the way to be successful. The house is chiefly patronised by Americans. It is curious to note how foreigners settle down upon certain houses. The French and Germans who go to Birmingham are gradually locating themselves at the Great Western Hotel. The Postal authorities are taking a portion of the Langham for an office, which will be a convenient addition to the place. You know the Grand Hotel at Paris; that was built for about a third of the expense of the Langham. "Ouida" lives at the latter house, and dines at table d'hôte every day. She is as well known there as a certain learned judge who patronises Evans's every evening.

Talking of Evans's, who is to write the story of Mr. Green, the proprietor. Sala, they say. It will be full of curious incidents. There is enough of interest in what Mr. Green has really seen and heard, and in the remarkable treasures he possesses, without the long bow being drawn. I hope facts will be adhered to when the book is written. Mr. Green has one of the most valuable collection of books, manuscripts, and personal treasures in London. Walpole's opera ticket, some other great man's Beefsteak Club silver gridiron, and mementos of Thackeray, are amongst the little things in Green's secret drawers. You see him at his post every night; he has not had a holiday for five and twenty years, except a few days ago, a sick-room holiday, poor fellow. It is to be hoped Evans's will still go on steering clear of the changes that are affecting the management of other houses of entertainment: it is the only respectable "house of call" after the theatres, (apart from the hotels of course,) in London.

Mr. and Mrs. German Reed have re-opened their pretty little house in Waterloo Place. They are supported by Mr. Cecil, Miss Fanny Holland, and Mr. Connell. Their leading piece is "Ages Ago," one of the prettiest trifles that has ever been produced at the Gallery, full of bright, sparkling music, which is admirably sung. Miss Holland is a charming acquisition. She has a sweet fresh voice, and there is nothing prettier than her song to the picture in the old castle. Sir, when you are next in town, go and see "Ages Ago." There is little else worth seeing, except "School." The Gaiety is filling nightly, with a stupid piece. "Toodles," at the Strand, is making hundreds laugh—and "Formosa" is still making the judicious grieve at Drury Lane. Mr. Simpson, the enterprising manager of the Birmingham Theatre, is producing "Formosa" in the Midland Metropolis. Mr. Simpson is entitled to all our thanks—he certainly brings theatrical London to Birmingham; but I wish London had not produced "Formosa."

Behind the scenes the London gossip is rather flat just now, but it foreshadows several new plays. Toole has given Byron £500 for a short piece, report says £800. The "Dodger" is a careful man as well as clever; I think we may say £500, sir. Burnand and the veteran Mark Lemon are engaged upon a joint play. A new hand entirely in dramatic work, Henry Barnett, of the *Globe* and *Sunday Times*, is likely to be amongst acted dramatists. Lytton has done a new work, but it is rather for reading than acting. Wilkie Collins's new story is to be dramatised for the Adelphi. These are wayside incidents which are not in the papers at present.

With regard to your London rival, *The Graphic*, it is a company, sir, with £25,000 subscribed. Don't fear them, sir, they will only help to stimulate the taste for illustrated papers, and the Midland Counties will take care of you. The expense of pictures is your strength and your weakness. It will keep you clear of provincial rivals. That is strength. Your weakness will also become your strength when you have thoroughly mastered your position and got your forty thousand subscribers. The Birmingham Cattle Show will be illustrated this year as it has never been before. The *London News's* special antagonist has got away from the old house the famous Harrison Weir, whose sketch of "Tom Cordery's Cottage" appeared in the last *Illustrated Midland News*. This artist went to Birmingham on Saturday for the new London paper. I don't know who is retained for the *London News;* but Mr. Pigott, one of the rising young artists of the day in the animal line has just shown me his credentials for your own paper, and we shall see what you make of the show, which is held at your head-quarters.

* * * *

Langham Hotel, London, Nov. 29.

THE GOSSIP.

Herr Ganz (father of Wilhelm Ganz) is dead.

A performing monkey has been added to the company at Astley's.

The *New York Mercury* says Mr. Sims Reeves and Miss Arabella Goddard are shortly expected there

Parepa travels with three hundred and nine pieces of baggage, exclusive of the singing members of her troupe.

The world is improving. The *Tomahawk* pays a handsome tribute to the Editor of *Punch*. What has become of *Will o' the Wisp?*

Major Coxson complains in the *Tablet* that the *Times* will not insert announcements of deaths with the letters R. I. P. added at the end.

Belle Boyd, once known as the Confederate spy, and afterwards as an actress, is now an inmate of the State lunatic asylum in San Francisco.

Miss Nightingale (according to the *Medical Press and Circular*) has offered to superintend the nursing department of the new hospital at Highgate.

Garibaldi's long-expected work, "Rome in the Nineteenth Century," has been translated from the Italian by Mrs. Colonel Chambers, and is in the press.

Miss Ada Swanborough left London last week for Cannes, in the South of France. It is expected that she will reappear at the Strand Theatre at Easter.

Mdlle. Patti has appeared in St. Petersburg, in 'La Traviata,' was recalled twenty-three times, and pelted *more Russico* with bouquets of rose-buds and baskets of camellias.

While Marie-Galli, the prima donna of a Parisian opera-house, was singing the other night, her tongue and brain were instantaneously paralysed, and the play stopped short.

A special commission in Vienna is making a general tour of inspection of theatres, for the purpose of suggesting precautions against future disasters by fire.—*Musical Standard*.

The department of Egyptian antiquities, British Museum, has received, as gifts from the Prince of Wales, two ancient Egyptian coffins and mummies, which possess some interesting qualities.

At the Princess's, Mr. Fechter commences a series of twelve farewell performances prior to his departure for his American engagements. He is announced to appear early in December, at Niblo's, New York.

The *North German Correspondent* says Kaulbach is engaged in the composition of a picture representing our Saviour driving the speculators and self-seekers out of the Œcumenical Council, as He once did the money-changers out of the Temple at Jerusalem.

The *Orchestra* hears that Mr. Paul Bedford, who has been living in retirement from active life, is seriously ill. His complaint—dropsy—leaves him free from pain, but Sir William Ferguson and the other physicians in attendance pronounce the case hopeless.

The Boston correspondent of the *New York Tribune* says that nearly 100 pages of Mrs. Stowe's volume, "A Vindication of Lady Byron," are in type, but they are still subject to the author's revision, and nothing is yet really in the shape which it is likely to have when published.

On Miss Mitford's MS. copy of her tragedy of "Julian," Mr. Macready marked the "business." That intended for the other actors was in English. His own "business" was set down in Latin,—the lady could never tell wherefore, unless that it was to show a certain literary taste.—*Athenæum*.

Street music in London is said to be improving in character, chiefly on account of the arrival of real wandering minstrels from Germany. These bands often include from ten to fifteen instruments, and sometimes they play admired overtures from Rossini, Auber, and Herold.—*Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*.

At a theatrical entertainment in Lafayette (Indiana), a few days ago—one of the very few ever given in that town—the audience was made up of people who had so little experience in the drama that they did not know when the play closed. After the curtain had fallen on "Oliver Twist," they still kept their seats until the dead Jew, Fagin, came out and told them they might go home.—*Orchestra*.

Respecting Mr. Vining's bankruptcy, Mr. W. S. Webster, 17, Ely-place, Holborn, London, writes to the papers as follows:—"In your report of Mr. Vining's bankruptcy there are two errors which I should feel obliged by your correcting. Mr. Webster, of the Adelphi, is not secured by a bill of sale or any other security, and the proof tendered by me on his behalf, requring to be amended, was not adjudicated upon."

Sir Charles Eastlake, the late President of the Royal Academy, as is well known, wrote both learnedly and eloquently upon subjects connected with the fine arts. Indeed, as an art-critic he will take a high stand in the literary history of our country. We are glad to learn that there is a forthcoming volume from his pen, to be entitled "New Contributions to the History of the Fine Arts." The work will be edited by his widow.—*Architect*.

There is, or ought to be, somewhere a book which is almost as well worth inquiring after as the Charlemagne Bible. The mother of Lord Byron collected all the criticisms on her son's 'Hours of Idleness.' She had the whole bound and interleaved. On the blank leaves so inserted she wrote her own comments on the poet, the poem, and the reviewers. These are said to have been written with wit and ability. Does any one (asks the *Athenæum*) know of the whereabouts of this volume?

A very capital remark of the late Sir George Smart's is vouched for by a well-known musical writer and enthusiast (in the best sense of the word), the Rev. Dr. Young. Sir George once said—"If I want to know what a piece of music's good for, I don't go to the conventionalized classes. They're taught what to admire; and they admire accordingly. I go straight to the Fustian Jackets; and I always observe that if there's anything in the music, the Fustian Jackets will find it out." There can be little doubt as to the "conventionalized classes," and none at all as to the medium that has dictated to them what they are to admire.—*Musical Standard*.

The Paris Correspondent of the *Daily News* feels called upon to correct a misleading sketch of M. Rochefort, which he has seen in a London journal. Rochefort (says the writer) is singularly neat and coquettish in his person. His clothes are of the most expensive materials and most fashionable cut. Only the other day one of his enemies wishing to discredit him with the people as an "aristocrat," gave a description of a particularly elegant pair of polished leather boots made for his small delicate feet by a Brussels *Cordonnier*, in whose shop window they were left with his name upon them, when he left the Belgian capital for Paris in a hurry. Then as to Diogenes—Rochefort is eminently social, rapidly making friends with everybody he comes in contact with, and is greatly liked by all his friends. He is only another instance of what a great English writer said many years since in connection with the names of Burdett, Duncombe, and Brougham, that "coarse, low, vulgar" people are apt to select men of refined manners, and gentle birth to represent them.

HADLEIGH CHURCH AND RECTORY.

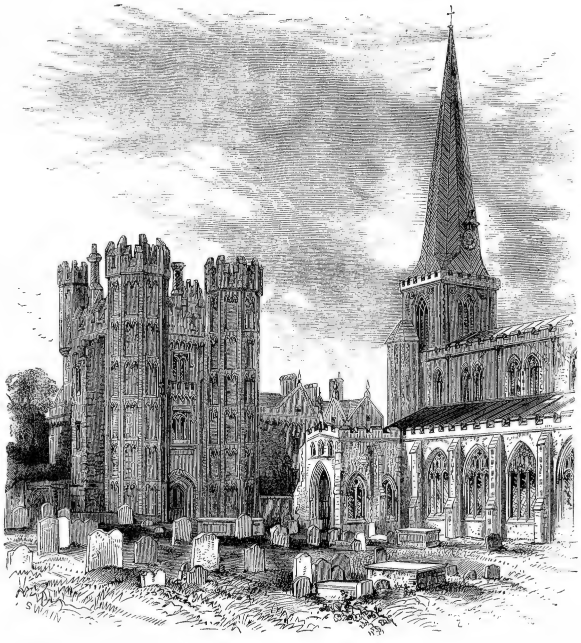
Few churches in the Eastern Counties are more interesting than the edifice of which we give an Engraving this week. Hadleigh Church lies in a pleasant valley, through which the river Brett winds into the Stour, before it mixes its waters with the German Ocean between Harwich and Landguard Fort. To the antiquary, Hadleigh is particularly attractive; it was there that one of the early Saxon kings of the East Angles was buried, and it was the scene of the martyrdom of Rowland Taylor, who suffered at the stake for his Protestantism in the reign of Queen Mary. Formerly, Hadleigh was the centre of the woollen trade, which now, however, is only carried on to a very limited extent. The church is of the Perpendicular order of architecture, having a fine tower and spire. It is in very good order, though the interior arrangement would shock ritual-loving churchmen. The pews are "double-bedded," comfortably lined with cloth, and inviting slumber. The church possibly stood on a more ancient site. It is built of flint, having stone quoins and dressings, spacious nave and chancel, and north and south aisles running the whole distance from east to west. It was much disfigured by the Puritans, who destroyed all the carved work with their iconoclastic hammers and axes. A spire of wood, covered with lead, surmounts the tower, and jutting out from the spire on the east side is an old "Ave Maria" bell, on which the clock strikes. There is a peal of eight bells in the tower. The roof of the nave is what is called "waggon-headed," but its beauties are hidden by a plaster ceiling. The chancel-roof is of a lower pitch, and more highly ornamented. Frescoes and inscriptions covered the walls some thirty years ago; but the church-restorers of that age removed all the colour as well as the wall inscriptions.

The rectory-house is remarkable, as being joined on to the tower depicted in our Illustration. According to the Rev. H. Pigot's History of Hadleigh, Archdeacon Pykenham intended to build a house, the approach to which was to be through the tower, but he died before he could execute the design. At all events, there was formerly a passage under the tower, but not so wide or lofty as the passage through the gateway at the "Place Farm." On the left hand are apartments for the porter, and on the right hand in the corner turret is a winding staircase, which leads to two large rooms above, and to the summit of the tower.

It was in the main room (says the same writer), in the library, that Dr. Rowland Taylor was one day sitting when the church bells struck up for an unusual service, to his great surprise, and he hastened into the church, and there discovered the priest of Aldham about to celebrate Mass according to the Roman office: he was followed by his wife, and a tumultuous scene occurred, which is graphically described by Foxe.

The old rectory-house is Elizabethan in style, and contains many good rooms.

Two local customs may be worth recording. The curfew is rung at five o'clock in the morning and eight in the evening from the Sunday following October 10 to the Sunday nearest March 10. At the Eight Bells inn the ringers have an old earthenware jug, which is only brought out at weddings of the upper classes and at Christmas, when the host fills it with liquor, and every stranger who enters the room is compelled to contribute towards refilling it.



HADLEIGH CHURCH AND RECTORY.

THE LAST SAXON KING.

The traveller on the Great Eastern Railway can hardly fail to notice, as he comes up from Cambridge to London, and when within about fifteen miles of the metropolis, a church tower of unusually large dimensions, lying about a mile to the left of the line, and surrounded by houses. This is Waltham Abbey, the traditional resting-place of Harold, the last Saxon King, who was killed at the famous battle of Hastings, and buried at the Abbey. There is, however, some amount of scepticism prevalent as to the accuracy of this narrative. An old historian (Giraldus Cambrensis), and a modern writer (Sir F. Palgrave), agree in believing that Harold escaped alive from the field of Hastings, and passed the remainder of his life in religious seclusion at Chester. There is every reason to suppose that the Saxon King did fall on the battlefield of Hastings, and that he was buried at Waltham Abbey, for his tomb bore the inscription—"Hic jacet Harold infelix," which seems to assert a positive fact. In Fuller's "Church History," too, is given a circumstantial account of the opening of the monument towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth, when a skeleton was discovered within.

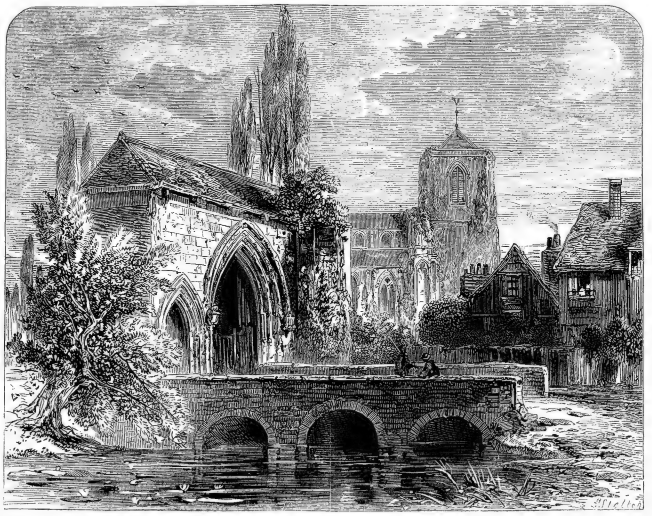
Waltham was a noted place before the Roman Conquest. It is said to have been founded by Tovi, the stallare, or standard-bearer to Canute; whose "villains" were the first inhabitants of the village, called Waltham from the Saxon words *Weald-ham*—the dwelling on the weald or forest. The second name of the parish (Waltham Cross) was derived from a cross, with a figure of the Saviour upon it, said to have been brought miraculously to the place from Montacute. The cross is reputed to have possessed wonderful powers, curing Harold, the son of Earl Godwin of Kent, of the palsy; in grateful acknowledgment of which benefit Harold of course rebuilt the church, doubled the number of its canons, settled ample estates on them, and founded, close by, a school of religious and useful learning. According to Farmer's "History of Waltham," originally the Abbey Church was a very magnificent building, and its curious remains must be regarded as the earliest undoubted specimen of the Norman style of architecture now existing in England. Though erected by Earl Harold, in the Anglo-Saxon period, it cannot be justly referred to any other style than that which the Normans permanently introduced after the Conquest. The great intercourse between the two countries, which King Edward the Confessor so particularly encouraged previously to that era, and the preference which he gave to Norman customs and Norman artificers, will readily account for this church being constructed from Norman designs. Edward himself caused the Abbey Church of Westminster to be rebuilt on similar principles; and in respect to the Monastery at Waltham, that monarch, as appears from his charter, dated in 1062, may be almost regarded as its coeval founder with Earl Harold.

Sufficient is known of this structure, to state that its original form was that of a cross, and that a square tower, which "contained a ring of five great tuneable bells," arose from the intersection of the nave and transept; the two great western supporters of which are connected with and partly wrought into the present east end.

The last abbot resigned the Abbey to Henry VIII., of whom Farmer relates an amusing anecdote:—"Having disguised himself in the dress of one of his guards, he contrived to visit, about dinner time, the Abbey of Waltham, where he was immediately invited to the abbot's table; a sirloin of beef being set before him, he played so good a part, that the abbot exclaimed, 'Well fare thy heart, and here's a cup of sack to the health of thy master; I would give a hundred pounds could I feed so heartily on beef as thou dost, but my poor queasy stomach can hardly digest the breast of a chicken. The king pledged him in return, and having dined heartily, and thanked him for his good cheer, he departed. A few days after, the abbot was sent for to London, and lodged in the Tower, where he was kept a close prisoner, and, for some time, fed upon bread and water. At length, a sirloin of beef was set before him, on which he fed as heartily as one of his own ploughmen. In the midst of his meal, the king burst into the room from a private closet, and demanded his hundred pounds, which the abbot gave with no small pleasure, and on being released returned to his monastery with a heart and pocket much lighter than when he left it a few days before."

During the altercations of that period between the King and the monks, the latter were charged with resorting to the nunnery at Cheshunt oftener than was consistent with monastic propriety. Fuller, in his "Church History," relates that Sir Henry Colt, of Nether Hall, who was a great favourite with Henry VIII. for his merry conceits, went late one night to Waltham Abbey, where being informed by his spies that some of the monks were indulging in female converse at Cheshunt Nunnery, he determined to intercept their return. With this intent, he had a buck stall pitched in the narrowest part of the meadow, or marsh, which they had to cross on their way home, and the monks getting into it in the dark, were inclosed by his servants. The next morning, Sir Henry presented them to the king, who, heartily laughing, declared that "he had often seen sweeter, but never fatter venison!"

The conventual estate now belongs to the Wake family. All that remains of the buildings of Waltham Abbey are the nave of the Church, the Lady Chapel (now a school-room and vestry), some ruinous walls, a small bridge and gateway, and a dark vaulted structure of two divisions connected with the convent garden. The church has been well restored at a cost of more than £5,000.



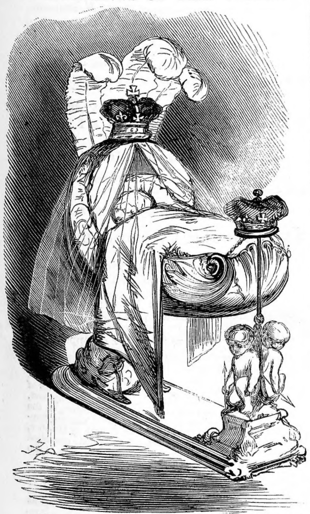
WALTHAM ABBEY.

MINERS' CONFERENCE.

An adjourned conference of miners was held at West Bromwich Church School-room on Monday: Mr. Blakemore, agent to the Miner's Association, presiding. The towns of Darlaston, Bilston, Wednesbury, Gornall, Gornall Wood, Langley, Old Hill, Dudley, Pensnett, Netherton, Oldbury, West Bromwich, Woodside, Saltwells, Kingswinford, Shut End, Lye Waste, Brierley Hill, Himley, Great Bridge, Rowley, Bradley, Coseley, and Tividale were represented by delegates. The chairman said some time ago the miners had solicited a reduction of two hours a day in their labour from the masters, and he believed they were justified in making such a request. Instead of granting this, however, the employers had offered an advance of wages, and in consequence of this offer there had been a division of opinion among the miners in different parts of the country, some being inclined to accept the offer of the masters, and others believing that it would be better to have the hours reduced. He believed himself that the reduced hours would be a greater boon than the proposed increase of wages—(hear, hear). The lessening of the hours of labour would give the miner an opportunity of raising himself morally, socially, and religiously. A Delegate stated the Rev. F. Willett had expressed himself favourable to a reduction of the hours of labour, and would do all in his power to bring about such an object. He proposed a resolution to the effect that both thick and thin miners should demand a level sixpence and a reduction of two hours a day. This resolution was seconded by another Delegate. Several Delegates expressed their belief that this was too much, and an amendment was proposed to the effect that they should agitate for a reduction of the hours, and no advance in wages. A number of the delegates here stated the results of interviews that they had with their employers upon the subjects now in agitation. They were for the most part favourable to the proposed education in hours of labour, although they did not think the change could be made all at once, but would require a little time. The discussion on the two proposals before the meeting was then resumed. A general feeling was expressed that, by asking too much, they would only fail in their object, and get nothing. Several of the speakers expressed a strong conviction that thin men should have the 6d. as well as the thick men; and others were of opinion that both thin and thick men were entitled to more than was offered to them. It was resolved to stand out until they received the 6d. increase. Those men who went to work on Tuesday at the 3d. increase were requested to continue at work until Saturday, and then give notice for an increase of wages. On the question of the reduction of the hours of working, it was proposed and seconded that fourteen days' notice should be given, from New Year's Day, of a reduction of two hours a day—the hours to be from seven in the morning till five at night. Several alterations upon this resolution were proposed, a number of the Delegates being in favour of the working hours being from six in the morning till four in the afternoon. Eventually, on a vote being taken, it was agreed that the hours should be from six in the morning till four in the afternoon, and that the notice should be from the first Monday after the 12th of January. The Conference next proceeded to consider the steps that should be taken for the support of the men who might have to go out on strike. It was suggested that some organisation should be instituted in connection with the means at present employed for the relief of the sick. There were serious faults with the present system of paying the sick money at the pit, the chief of which was that the doggies and butties who received the money in many instances gave no account of the moneys so received, and it was even stated that in one particular instance the collector of these sick moneys had been able to build two houses out of the money that had been kept back. After some discussion it was agreed that, with the commencement of the short time, they should discontinue the payment of sick money at the pits, and should pay it instead into a society, to be called "The Miners' Sick and Benefit Society," and that this society should embrace three distinct funds—the sick, the funeral, and the labour funds. A vote of thanks was given to the Rev. E. Willetts, and the Conference ended.

How Autographs are Manufactured.—There has just fallen into the hands of the Paris police a fabricator of spurious autographs. Recently a woman, who gave a false address, called on M. Muffatt, a dealer in ancient books, and offered, for a relatively low price, letters of Beranger, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Madame Rachel, Talleyrand, Cambronne, &c., which she said she had been charged to sell for a collector who was in want of money. Mr. Muffat purchased the autographs, which an expert discovered were forgeries. The woman was arrested, and at her house the police found an apartment elegantly furnished, containing a library, in part composed of old books, and discovered numerous autographs, some real and some false, with specimens of old writing, imitations of the signatures of the most remarkable personages of the present century, a quantity of parchments, and numerous leaves torn from ancient books. The woman acknowledged that the autographs had been forged by her son, a clerk in the Soleil Insurance Office. The young man was subsequently arrested in that establishment, while in the act of transcribing an autograph of Silvio Pellico, of which four other copies were found at his home. He is 28 years old, of remarkable intelligence, learned, and of extraordinary skill in caligraphy. He and his mother are in prison.

INCIDENTS OF THE WEEK.

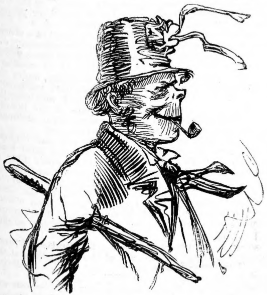


We *(Times)* have been favoured with the following bulletin:—

"Marlborough House, Pall Mall, S. W.
Nov. 26, 1.30 a.m.

"Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales was safely delivered of a Princess at 12.20 this morning. Her Royal Highness and the infant Princess are doing well.

(Signed) "ARTHUR FARRE, M.D.
EDWARD H. SIEVEKING, M.D."



The Tipperary "boys," by a majority of 102, have elected a congenial representative in Parliament in the person of O'Donovan Rossa, who is now in gaol, undergoing a long sentence of imprisonment for treason-felony.

The Royal Humane Society has just awarded its medal, with a suitable written testimonial, to Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson, a lady residing in Henry-street, Derby, for saving the life of a child, named Sarah Ann Sharratt, under the following circumstances:—Mrs. Thompson, in company with another lady, was walking on the Nottingham-road, Derby, and when opposite the racecourse it commenced raining fast. They sought shelter in a cottage close by, and while there a scream and splash were heard, indicative of a fall into the water. Running to the banks of the canal, Mrs. Thompson, with great presence of mind, sprang into a small boat, and by dint of great exertion reached within a few feet of the spot where the child had fallen in, just in time to seize it as it rose to the surface of the water a second time. While thus employed in the stern of the boat, no one being in it to render assistance, it was capsized, and Mrs. Thompson was submerged. She retained her hold of the child, however, and after a lengthened struggle succeeded in placing her in the boat, and ultimately took her safely to shore.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

A FEAST OF SPRATS.—A correspondent of *The Queen* describes a private sprat feast at which several persons cooked the fish in as many different ways. The following was considered to be the most successful:—

> The conclusion I came to, when it was all over, was that a very nice dish can be made with sprats, either for supper or dinner. If it is not liked by everybody, at any rate it will have the advantage of being as cheap a dish of fish as it is possible to have. The way to prepare it is this: Butter a flat tin, or a dish that will stand the fire; dispose your sprats upon this close together, say a couple of dozen. Over them squeeze the juice of a lemon, and sprinkle a little powdered sweet herbs, pepper, and salt in due proportion; cover up with enough bread crumbs to completely hide the fish, place a few pieces of butter on the top, and put your dish or tin in the oven for about twenty minutes; at the end of that time, if the top is not well browned, use a salamander, or put the dish in front of the fire till it attains the desired colour; serve immediately. It might not be amiss to rub the dish with garlic before commencing operations.

We have tried the receipt; a layer of bread crumbs between each layer of fish would improve it. We like the old-fashioned way best: cook the fish on a gridiron and eat plain and very hot. At fashionable tables where you meet this "vulgar" fish only now and then, the sprat is dry and tasteless, in a coating of flour or some other equally objectionable disguise.

SPINNING WHEELS.—These picturesque machines are coming into fashion again. "Rouet," in a contemporary, says,—

> Mr. Helbronner, of Regent-street, is expecting immediately some spinning wheels from Germany. They will vary in price, according to the wood they are made of, the ornamentation, &c. He also will keep the flax for spinning, and all necessary adjuncts for this work, which, although so highly thought of in "olden times," had fallen into such complete disuse, that at the present moment it would be difficult to say where a spinning wheel could be made or purchased. This long-forgotten art is now likely to become very fashionable, as from a recent photograph of Her Most Gracious Majesty it appears that she herself does not disdain to handle the distaff and spindle, in the midst of her more weighty occupations.

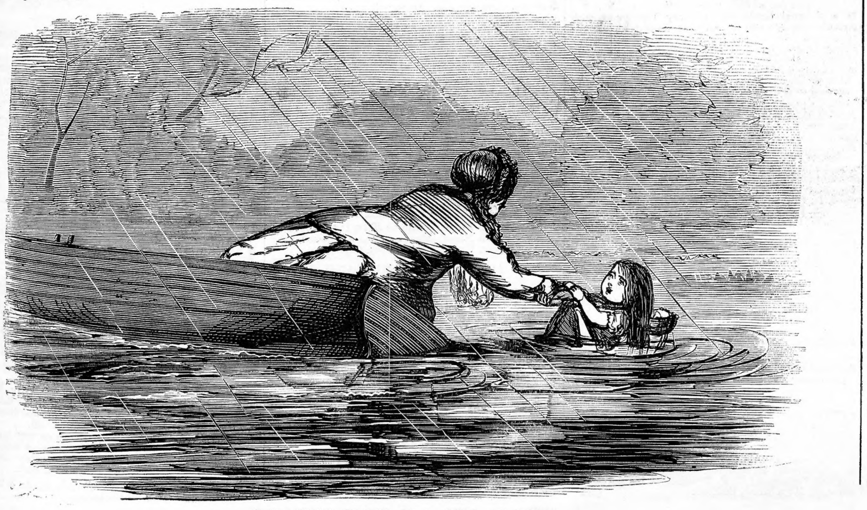
It is a good sign of the times even that ladies are beginning to assume an appearance of work. We shall perhaps get back again with the revival of old fashions to the days when our great grandmothers did not think it *infra dig.* to cook and sew and do their duty as heads of households.

FRESH FISH.—The firmness of the flesh and clearness of the eye are unfailing signs of fresh fish. Herrings and mackarel ought to be eaten very fresh. They are not good many hours after they are caught. Both are nice split and fried, or dried and pickled. Turbot, and all flat white fish, are rigid and firm when fresh; the under side ought to be a rich cream colour. When out of season or stale this becomes a bluish white, and the flesh soft and flaccid. Dace, dory, hake, and pike are in the highest perfection in the month of November; cod, dory, ling, skate, and tench in December.

WEDDINGS.—It is "Christopher Kenrick," I believe, who has such a very quiet wedding, and argues that a wedding should always be quiet and private. I confess, whether "Christopher" was making a virtue of necessity or not, that I am entirely of his opinion, and I hope the Editor of THE ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS will let me tell his readers that quiet weddings are likely to come into fashion. Here is a note in a letter written to my favourite gossip *The Queen*:—

> On the occasion of weddings I see it is now the fashion for the mother of the bride to issue "at home" cards for the afternoon of the wedding day, when visits of congratulation are expected. This is rather a good way of getting through an irksome afternoon, and pleasant for everybody who may be interested. I know of two weddings quite lately that have been conducted in the quietest manner possible. The brides, though young, pretty, and fashionable, have actually gone to church in morning silk dresses, with only one or two bridesmaids, and afterwards they have quietly lunched *en famille*, reserving all gaities for a later time. As in neither instance was there any question of economy, I know the arrangement resulted solely from personal taste and feeling. I am quite sure the bridegrooms like the quiet wedding. There is nothing an Englishman detests so much as a fuss and a scene. It is not at all unusual now for the newly-married couple to pay visits a fortnight after the wedding.

Perhaps this dislike to the fashionable fuss of a fashionable wedding is the reason why the men do not propose. Let all expectant brides at once make the quiet wedding "the fashion," and I and others who are not "expectant" may yet be so.—L. M.



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MESSRS. HOBBS have been favoured with instructions to offer for SALE by AUCTION, at the Ram Hotel, Gloucester, on Wednesday, the 22nd December, 1869, at 12 o'clock, in numerous lots, these valuable ESTATES and LANDS, being portions of the property late belonging to Benjamin Hooke, Esq., deceased.

Particulars and Plans are in course of preparation, and, with further information, may be obtained of Mr. A. R. Hudson, Solicitor, Pershore; Messrs. Webb and Buck, Surveyors, or Messrs. Hobbs, Worcester. [268

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For further particulars apply to Mr. A. R. Hudson, Solicitor, Pershore; Mr. J. Hawkes Woodward, Solicitor, 103, Newhall Street, Birmingham; or Messrs. Bentley and Hill, Auctioneers and Valuers, Worcester and Pershore. [243

"LAUGHERN HOUSE," PERSHORE.

MESSRS. BENTLEY AND HILL are instructed by the Executors of the late Francis Davies, Esq., TO SELL BY AUCTION, at Residence, Laughern House, Pershore, on Tuesday, December 7th, 1869, and four following days, at 11a.m., the Valuable HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE for Entrance Hall, Dining-room, Drawing-room, Study, several Bed-chambers, and Domestic Offices, Plate and Best Plated Articles, China, best Cut Glass, Cutlery, Library of Books, Table and Bed Linen, and important collection of Ancient and Modern Pictures, including four purchased at Sale of the late Lord Northwick's Gallery, and comprising examples of the following masters:—Salvator Rosa, A. Clint, Both, A. Wynants, J. Schorel, J. Teniers, T. Woodward, Sorgh, G. Hoet, Wychelo, T. Stoop, Gainsborough, Wouvermans, A. Van Diest, and E. Tilburg. Engravings, a cellar of CHOICE WINES, containing upwards of 300 dozens, including Ports of 1834, 1836, 1840, 1842, 1844, 1847, 1850, 1851, 1854, 1858, 1861, 1863, and 1865; Amontillado and other Sherry, E. I. Madeira, Clarets, Burgundy, Champagne, Masdeu, Tarragona, &c., &c. Also Garden Tools, Iron Garden Roll, Stable Articles, and numerous Effects of the Deceased, described in Catalogues, to be had at the offices of Auctioneers, Worcester and Pershore, or post free on application.

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⁂ The Great Western Railway Cmpany have kindly consented for the Train leaving Worcester (Shrub Hill) at 10 a.m. to stop at Pershore Station, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 7th and 8th December. [243

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LOAN OF £2,500,000 (STERLING.)

(Authorised by Her Majesty's Government.)

The METROPOLITAN BOARD of WORKS GIVE NOTICE that they will be prepared to RECEIVE on THURSDAY, the 25th instant, sealed TENDERS for a LOAN of £2,500,000 (Sterling), on Security of Stock to be created under the provisions of an Act passed in the last Session of Parliament (32 and 33 Vic., c. 102).

The Stock is to bear Interest at the rate of £3 10s. per cent. per annum, payable quarterly at the Bank of England (dividend warrants being transmitted by post, if desired) in January, April, July, and October, on the same days on which the Government dividends are payable, and will be redeemed at par on the 6th of October, 1929, should the same not have been previously cancelled by purchase in the open market by the operation of the Redemption Fund referred to in the Act.

The books of the Stock will be kept at the Bank of England, where all assignments and transfers will be made. Holders of this Stock will be able to take out Stock Certificates, transferable to Bearer, with Coupons attached, on payment of the stamp duty.

The primary security for the Loan is the power of the Board to rate the whole rateable property within the Metropolis, as defined by the Metropolis Local Management Act, 1855, the annual value of which now amounts to £18,710,635.

The limit of the Board's borrowing power, under the above-mentioned Act, is £10,500,000 sterling, of which the sum of £3,766,200, in respect of the Thames Embankments and the New Street from Blackfriars-bridge to the Mansion House, is specially secured on the Coal and Wine Duties, and on the Lands and other properties connected with these undertakings.

Parliament has directed the establishment of a special fund for paying the dividends on and for redeeming the principal of the Metropolitan Consolidated Stock within a period of sixty years from the date of its creation; and the Lords of her Majesty's Treasury, under the before-mentioned Act of Parliament, have entire control over the Board's creation of Stock, and over the amount to be set aside each year out of the Board's Consolidated Rate to meet the payment of the dividends and to secure the repayment of the principal.

Tenders may be for the whole or any part (in even hundreds of Stock) of the said Loan, and must state what amount of money will be given for every £100 of the said Stock. Tenders at a price including fractions of a shilling other than sixpence will not be accepted. Tenders are to be delivered in, sealed, at the Chief Cashier's Office, Bank of England, before Two o'clock on THURSDAY, the 25th November, and the amount of Stock subscribed for must be written on the outside of the Tender

A deposit of Five per Cent. on the amount of Stock tendered for must be paid for at the same office at the time of delivery of the Tender, and parties tendering must be careful not to enclose the Deposit in the sealed Tender. Where no allotment is made, the deposit will be returned: and in case of partial allotment, the balance of the deposit will be applied towards the first instalment.

The dates at which the further payments on account of the said Loan will be required are as follows:—

On Wednesday, the 1st of December, 1869, so much of the amount tendered and accepted as when added to the Deposit paid will leave Eighty Pounds for each Hundred Pounds of Stock.
On Thursday, the 6th of January, 1870, £20 per cent.,
On Tuesday, the 1st of February, 1870, £20 per cent.,
On Wednesday, the 6th of April, 1870, £20 per cent.,
On Wednesday, the 6th of July, 1870, £20 per cent.;

but parties who desire it may, at the date of any instalment, pay up in full, and a discount at the rate of two per cent. per annum will be allowed. In case of default in the payment of any instalment at its proper date, the deposit and instalments previously paid will be liable to forfeiture.

Interest on the total nominal amount of the Stock (calculated from the 6th January, 1870) will be payable on the 6th of April following.

Before proceeding to open the Tenders, the Board will, with the approval of her Majesty's Treasury, fix the minimum price, below which no Tender will be accepted: and in the event of an amount of Loan in excess of £2,500,000 (Sterling) being offered above such minimum price, the Tenders at the lowest price accepted will be subject to a pro rata diminution.

Scrip Certificates, to Bearer, with Coupons attached, for the dividends payable on 6th April and 6th July, 1870, will be issued in exchange for the provisional receipts. The Stock will be inscribed in the Bank books on and after the 6th July, 1870.

No tender will be received unless upon a printed form, which must not be enclosed in an envelope.

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JOHN POLLARD, Clerk of the Board.
Metropolitan Board of Works,
Spring-gardens, 12th November, 1869.

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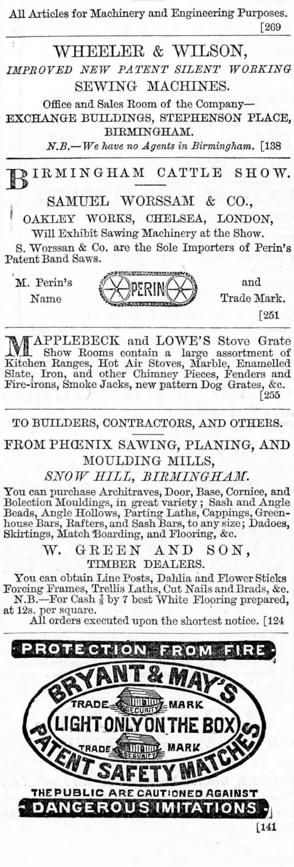

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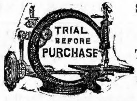

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REMARKS ON ITS DIETETIC VALUE.

It is undoubtedly true that the strength of a nation is the component strength of its individuals; and assuredly the health and strength of individuals are dependent more upon the quantity and quality of the food consumed by them than upon any other single condition. This remark, though true of all ages and circumstances of life, applies with especial force to the diet of early life. The boy, it is said, is the father of the man, and in one very important sense this is true, for if the boy be weakly, so will the man, and both are sure to be so if the food supplied to the former, and out of which the latter grows, be not of such quality as to develop not only animal heat and tissue, but tissue which is also strong and vigorous.

In very early life the greatest attention is necessary to ensure the proper maintenance of animal heat, for heat is almost life to an infant, and herein lies one of the great merits of our Corn Flour. But, as age advances, development follows, tissue is formed, and *strength* is required; then it is that something more is necessary as an article of diet, not in the place of heat-creating food, but as an addition to it, and that, too, of a kind to ensure, as far as may be, the proper development of all the tissues of the body in their due proportion and in vigorous health, Moreover, it is essentially necessary that the food supplied for this purpose be light, easy of digestion, and readily convertible; if it fails in either of these respects, nothing can make up for it, for digestion would be disturbed, and that would put the whole machine out of gear.

Now, we have the satisfaction of knowing upon scientific evidence, from the absolute laws of chemistry, and the unvarying testimony of the physiology of digestion, that in the new article of diet which we have manufactured, and to which we have given the name of *Pearlina*, we have produced a food which is capable of supplying all the elements of the tissues in the highest perfection. It is also in a form which can be digested with the greatest ease at a time when the body really requires such a food for its proper development, and yet is not able to bear the stronger animal foods.

Pearlina is rich in the nitrogenous or albuminous properties, and out of these, bone, muscle, and nerve are formed. It is not rich in merely starchy matter, and is not, therefore, intended to supplant other foods; but, when combined with milk, or taken alternately with Corn Flour, it supplies all that is essential to build up the fabric of the human body in a state of health and strength; and by thus varying the food a much better result is obtainable than by a more restricted diet, for a variety of feeding is really of greater moment than is commonly supposed, and ought not to be regarded merely as a question of taste. Tastes, as they are called, are often instincts which are pregnant with wisdom and truth.

In addition to its value in the dietary of children, *Pearlina* may be made most agreeable for the dinner table, either in the form of a light, easily-digested, but highly-nutritive pudding; or, mixed with a certain proportion of flour, it will be found greatly to improve the quality of pastry, making it not only easier of digestion, and therefore more readily assimilable, but at the same time more agreeable to the palate, and with absolutely greater nutritive power. The value, therefore, of this new article of diet is not limited to children, nor merely to invalids, but will be felt to be a boon to the community at large.

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